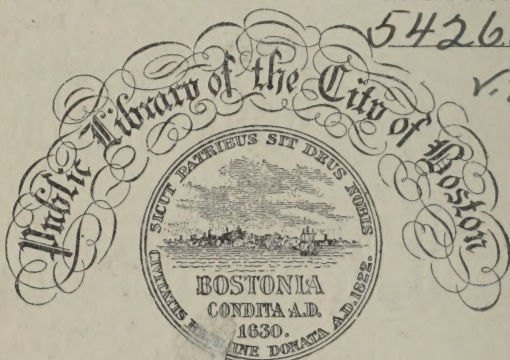


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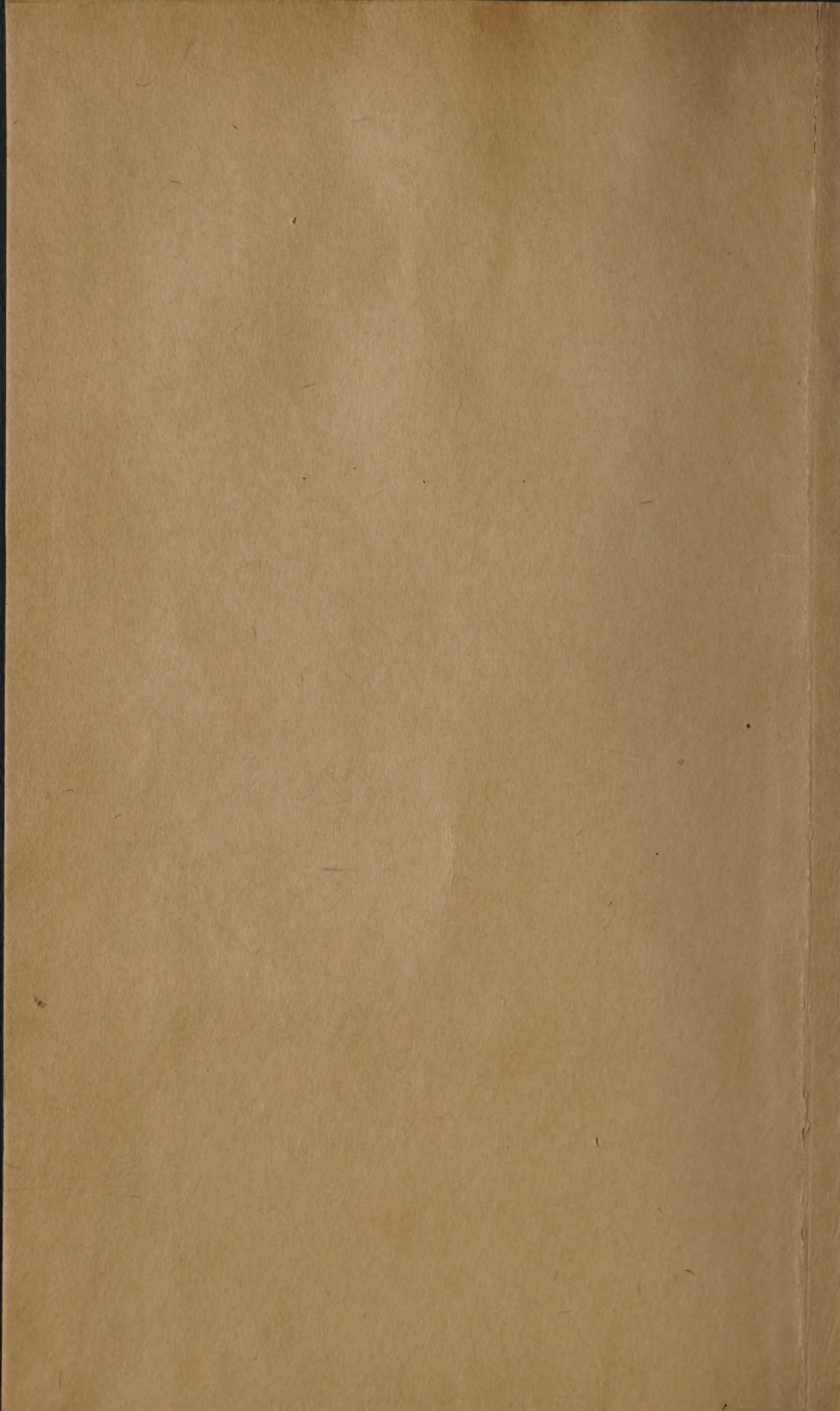
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A
HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL
COMMENTARY
ON
THE OLD TESTAMENT,
WITH
A NEW TRANSLATION

BY
M. KALISCH, PHIL. DOC., M.A.

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EXODUS.

I BORE YOU ON EAGLES' WINGS, AND BROUGHT YOU TO MYSELF.—XIX. 4.

English Edition.

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P R E F A C E.

ALMOST marvellous is the progress which the Biblical sciences have made since the beginning of this century; it amounts to a total regeneration, and comprises nearly all branches of sacred literature. The knowledge of the holy tongue has been materially promoted by the profoundest grammatical and lexicographical researches; the vigorous study of Biblical history has facilitated our insight into the organic connection of the different books; whilst the critical analysis of universal history has disclosed the natural relation of the people of Israel with the other nations of antiquity; a host of eminent travellers have explored the geography of the East; have made us familiar with the customs of the Oriental nations; and have described many usages and institutions, which enable us correctly to understand numerous obscure Biblical passages and allusions.

However, all these efforts have hitherto remained isolated; no attempt has been made to unite them in one focus, and to bring them into immediate application on the exposition of the sacred books; the existing English Commentaries are mostly without the refreshing and animating breath of modern science; they are essentially composed of antiquated materials; they cannot entirely satisfy the educated or the learned reader, for the spirit of our time is that of progress and historical disquisition. It is the aim of the present work to attempt that amalgamation of modern enquiries; in the simplest possible form we have endeavoured to illustrate the sacred text in its various relations, and thus systematically to prepare the way for a more comprehensive penetration into the spirit of the Biblical records.

That such undertaking is really an urgent desideratum, is confirmed by the following remarks of the Rev. S. Davidson (in *Kitto's Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, i. p. 455),

who, speaking of "those English Commentaries which are most current among us," observes: "By a series of appended remarks, plain statements are expanded; but wherever there is a real perplexity, it is glozed over with marvellous superficiality. It may be that much is said *about* it, but yet there is no penetration beneath the surface; and when the reader asks himself what is the true import, he finds himself in the same state of ignorance as when he first took up the Commentary in question. *Pious reflections*, and *multitudinous inferences* enter largely into our popular books of exposition. They *spiritualize*, but they do not *expound*. They *sermonize* upon a book, but they do not catch its spirit, or comprehend its meaning. All this is out of place. A *preaching, spiritualizing* Commentary does not deserve the appellation of *Commentary* at all. . . . Our popular commentators piously descant on what is well known, leaving the reader in darkness, where he most needs assistance." The intelligent student may decide, if we have succeeded in avoiding a similar censure.

But modern criticism also has its defects; like every new principle, it has been pursued with one-sided rigour; the desire of consistency has led to extremes. The treasures of the old, especially the Jewish commentators, were neglected; the positive basis was deserted; every traditional conception was rejected as a prejudice and an illusion. The sacred records were dismembered, transposed, falsified; the most aerial conjectures were framed; and the palm was awarded to those, who excelled the rest in boldness and fanciful theories. Instead of penetrating into the notions of the Bible, these critics forced upon it ideas which were nothing but the emanations of their individual preconceptions; and instead of commenting with calm examination, violence and destruction were their constant weapons. Can it cause astonishment, that under such hands the spirit of the holy books vanished, and that the most venerable documents were degraded to an aggregate of contradictions, enigmas, and singularities? It has been our careful endeavour to avoid these extremes; we have disregarded none of the more important ancient commentators; we have tried to produce an equilibrium between the faith of former ages and the science of our century; we have examined without prepossession; and have pre-

served whatever seemed fit to contribute to the true elucidation of the sacred word.

Hence follows a third feature of our commentary. As truth is its only aim, and impartiality its only guide; it is perfectly unsectarian; it does not labour to defend the doctrines of any particular creed; the holy text is its exclusive basis, and the most probable meaning of its contents its sole object. The author has striven, to the utmost of his power, to keep himself above the parties, impressed with the conviction that this is the only safe method of gradually reconciling the conflicting opinions, and of promoting harmony and true brotherly love among the different sects of society. He trusts to have excluded no class of readers; clergymen and laymen, students of history and pious readers, he hopes, will consult the book not without interest and advantage.

But in order to secure this end with greater certainty, he has based his commentary, not upon an existing translation, but on the Hebrew text itself; he has gone back to the source, and hopes thereby to have avoided numerous current errors. Everybody willingly acknowledges the excellencies of the authorised English version; but so vast is the progress of Hebrew philology since the time of its preparation, that a thorough revision has become almost indispensable; and so deeply felt is this requirement, that societies have been formed to meet it. We have, therefore, deemed it necessary to add to our commentary a new translation, which embodies the results of our enquiries, and upon which we have bestowed a due share of attention. Those renderings of the English Version, which we consider as erroneous conceptions, have been noted at the foot of our translation. But it is admitted, with equal unanimity, that the language of the English Version is frequently obsolete, and not seldom obscure and unintelligible; we have altered such passages, without, however, destroying the old venerable hue; we have designedly preserved a colouring of antiquity.

Lastly, in order to facilitate the study of the holy language, without which a deep understanding of the sacred books is impossible, we have published a larger edition of this work, which contains, besides the Hebrew text, a grammatical analysis of all difficult passages, and other philological remarks. For the man of science, even if he

cultivates other branches than Oriental literature, we should recommend the larger edition, in which he will find the necessary references and a statement of the sources. In this smaller edition everything is omitted which might be deemed superfluous by the general reader.

We have commenced with the publication of the Second Book of the Pentateuch, because it forms the centre of Divine revelation, and because it is best calculated to convey a correct idea of the spirit and tendency of our Commentary; we have treated the explanation of the Mosaic laws with more copiousness than is the case in the existing Commentaries; for it is by its laws that the people of Israel was distinguished from all the other nations; by its theology it became the holy, the chosen people; whilst by its manners and customs it is only a member in the common family of the Oriental nations (see pp. vii. viii). The commentary on Genesis will follow next, and then the other books in due order.

The author, by observing, in conclusion, that he has endeavoured to sum up, as it were, the previous researches, in order to promote, however modestly, the Biblical exegesis, by calm and impartial combinations, has, at the same time established his claim to the indulgent examination of the learned public; he has undertaken the arduous work, strengthened by his love for the sacred and earliest sources of human civilization; and he willingly confides it to the benign protection of Divine grace.

M. KALISCH.

London, June 1st., 1855.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1.—IMPORTANCE, NAME, CONTENTS, DIVISION, AND UNITY OF EXODUS.

1. THE history of Israel, and the progress of Divine Revelation to Israel and to mankind, constitute the two cardinal points of interest in the records of the Old Testament. Prophecy itself is but a compound of those two elements, for it is either prospective and anticipative history, or an exhortative comment on the spirit of the Divine Law. But in no part of the Sacred Volume are those two ingredients so obviously and so completely combined as in the Second Book of the Pentateuch. For whilst Genesis treats of the lives of the Hebrew *patriarchs*, Exodus narrates the fates of the Hebrew *nation*; the former contains chiefly *biographies*, the latter *history*; the one has more an *archæological*, the other a purely *historical* interest; the one is the *promise*, the other the *fulfilment*.¹ Genesis has in every respect the character of an *introduction*; it teaches the existence, the omnipotence of God, but discloses not His essence, defines not His internal nature in its abstraction; it proclaims, at least indirectly, the unity of God, but only in so far as He is the Lord and Ruler of Nature; it implies many principles of morality and human and divine right, but it does not comprize them in a system, or consider them from one common and ideal point of view; it contains the conclusion of a covenant, but its sign and symbol is mysterious and external; it therefore *prepares* us for the sublime notions of sanctity, and religious life, but it does not develop them in their ennobling consequences, it does not ensure their practical effect upon the conduct of man by other and more efficacious institutions; it records revelations, but they are restricted to individuals—they refer to

¹ Comp. Gen. xv. 13—16, and Exod. xii. 40.

the future rather than the present; they are more abrupt and desultory manifestations than a permanent, ever ready, perfect communion; they are more important for the hopes and prospects which they open than for the immediate bliss they confer; they are a veil through which the first outlines of the world's history are dimly discernible. Genesis leads the thread of narration to that very point where the *family* begins to assume the importance, not of a *tribe*, but of a *people*; and Exodus carries on the account through the infancy and youth of the new nation; through the ignominy of Egyptian servitude, and the glory of heaven-wrought redemption; through the darkness of idolatrous aberration, and the light of revealed truth; the Israelites, physically and mentally released, are trained for the difficult warfare against opposing nations, and for a happy political existence in their own conquered land. But the *political* government of Israel is based on, or is rather indetical with, its *religious* organization; it is a *theocracy*,¹ therefore our book contains also a full outline of the moral laws which man owes to God and to his fellow-creatures; and so admirable is their purport and so systematical their arrangement, that they form the eternal and infallible standard of human conduct.² The Decalogue and the "Book of the Covenant," embodied in Exodus, render it with respect to Divine revelation, the most important volume which the human race possesses.

2. It is known that the name *Exodus* (*Ἐξόδος*, *departure*, viz., from Egypt) was given to our book by the Hellenists, from the chief event therein narrated, whilst the Jews designate it by the two Hebrew words with which it commences, *We-eleh Shemoth*, or simply *Shemoth*.

3. The contents of the Second Book of Moses, which we have constantly developed in the Summaries before each chapter or section, inclose an extraordinary variety of matter, and yield to the enquiring mind an unusual extent of information. The narration of the fates of Israel yields ample and copious results for historical and chronological researches; the ten plagues, for the natural phenomena of the East; the Exode, and the journeys of the Hebrews, for geographical enquiries; the Decalogue, and the laws of the Book of the Covenant, for the most fertile philoso-

¹ See note on xix. 6.

² See notes on xx. 1—14, and prefatory remarks to xx. 19, 20.

phical and legislatorial investigations; and the construction of the holy Tabernacle, and the sacred utensils, not only for the history of art and mechanical skill, but also for the innermost character of the religious ideas of Mosaism. This book is, therefore, as interesting for the diversity, as it is important for the sublimity, of its contents.

4. Exodus may conveniently be divided into two chief portions:—

I. The *Historical* Part: i.—xi. (Israel in Egypt); xii. 21—42, 51. (Exode); xiii. 17—xix. 25. (Journeys and Wanderings to Mount Sinai); xx. 15—18. (Divine Revelation); xxiv. (Covenant concluded between God and Israel); xxxii—xl. (Its violation by the worship of the golden calf and its renewal; the erection of the Tabernacle and the inauguration of Aaron and his sons).

II. The *Legislative* Part: xii. 1—20, 43—50. (Abib appointed as the first month; Passover); xiii. 1—16. (Sanctification of the Firstborn and Phylacteries); xx. 1—14. (Decalogue); xx. 19. to xxiii. 33. (The Book of the Covenant); xxv.—xxxi. (Tabernacle and Sacerdotal Robes).

It will be seen that the first part of Exodus is predominantly historical; the second essentially legislative or dogmatical; but yet the former contains three important *laws*; and the latter, the *history* of a flagrant breach, on the part of Israel, of the promises made concerning the faithful observance of the Law, the erection of the holy Tabernacle, and the consecration of Aaron and his descendants.

5. The authenticity of Exodus has been less exposed to the attacks of criticism than that of the other books of the Pentateuch, especially Genesis. Even the most radical sceptics have admitted that a historical kernel lies at the bottom of the accounts concerning the Exode, and that Moses is the author at least of the Decalogue. It is generally admitted, that both the details of the Egyptian plagues and the journeys of Israel manifest the most accurate acquaintance with the phenomena and localities described. And that rare unanimity makes again this book one of the most interesting parts of the holy records.

But its unity has been questioned, not only by that school

of Biblical critics which dismembers the sacred writings, quite as arbitrarily and blindly as many hypercritical philologists of the last century dissected Homer's songs into incoherent fragments; but even more moderate interpreters believe that our book is disfigured by spurious interpolations. We have in all such passages tried to refute this very questionable opinion. *We see the completest harmony in all parts of Exodus; we consider it as a perfect whole, pervaded throughout by one spirit and the same leading ideas.* As it is one of the chief objects of this commentary to prove that unity, we content ourselves here with referring, among other passages, to our notes on vi. 10, 26.; xi. 1.; xii. 1.; xvi. 35, 36.; xxiv. 1.

If really our book should, in some parts, have a fragmentary character, this would be far from proving a plurality of authors; it is, on the contrary, in perfect harmony with the nature of a historical work, the single events of which are recorded by a contemporary writer immediately after their occurrence. In such cases we cannot expect a pragmatistical digest of the historical facts; and that peculiarity which has been described as a defect in style and composition, constitutes certainly a strong proof of the truth and authenticity of the events narrated.

§ 2. THE CHRONOLOGY OF EXODUS.

THE chronology of the period comprised in Exodus, is, like almost all other epochs of Biblical history, involved in intricate and embarrassing difficulty; and it is by the most persevering patience only that we might at last succeed to bring the events related in our book in harmony both with each other and with profane history.

I. SOJOURN OF THE ISRAELITES IN EGYPT.

1. The cardinal point of this important question is: how long did the Israelites stay in Egypt? or, how many years elapsed from the immigration of Jacob to the Exodus under the leadership of Moses? If we follow the clear Biblical representation, we find that the period is *prophetically* fixed at 400 years (Gen. xv. 13), and *historically* stated, in more accurate figures, at 430 years (Exod. xii. 40). Although this Biblical statement is surrounded with perplexing difficulties, we are not justified

in deviating from it, as has been done by the traditional chronology, which assigns only 210 or 215 years to the sojourn of Israel in Egypt. We have explained this complicated subject fully in the larger edition of this work, to which we refer the inquiring reader.

II. BIRTH OF MOSES.

The next chronological question of interest is, to ascertain which interval lies between the death of Joseph and the birth of Moses, or between Gen. i. 26, and Exod. ii. 2. Jacob was 130 years old when he came to Egypt (Gen. xlvii. 9, 28). He lived there 17 years, and died at the age of 147 years. Joseph survived him by about 54 years. Amram was, at the birth of Moses, married about 15 years (see note to ii. 8); and Moses was 80 years old at the time of the Exodus (vii. 7); we have, therefore, from the death of Joseph to the marriage of Amram $430 - (17 + 54 + 15 + 80) = 264$ years; or to the birth of Moses $279 (264 + 15)$ years. And these numbers harmonize perfectly with all the circumstances connected with the Egyptian bondage and the Exodus of the Israelites. That period was extended enough to allow the descendants of Jacob to increase to a dangerously numerous people, although it could not eradicate or even weaken among them those independent and bold habits which constitute the most prominent characteristics of nomadic tribes, and which their new rulers, themselves children of the desert, considered it the first dictate of policy to check and to subdue, the more so, as a certain tradition of the authority enjoyed by their ancestors in Canaan lived clearly in their recollection, and stimulated them to regain that ancient influence. During that period, it is likewise probable, that the memory of the eminent services of Joseph had faded away in Egypt, and that the Israelites had begun to be regarded with an invidious and suspicious eye. That the holy writer hastens over that protracted period of 264 years with a very few passing words, will be found but natural, if the chief character and end of the Pentateuch is considered, which is, to give a historical account of the facts and circumstances explaining how Israel became a people, and how it became *the people of God*, worthy of His revelation and special

providence. Everything, therefore, which has no reference to that end, is studiously omitted; the whole Pentateuch appears but a narration of the gradual fulfilment of the promises which God gave to Abraham. This can be substantiated by many instances, one of which will suffice, namely, the life of Moses previous to his appearing before Pharaoh, as the champion for Israel's deliverance. His education, and all his fates anterior to his first active interest for his brethren, and his flight to Midian, a period of at least 40 years (see note on ii. 11), are scarcely alluded to; the transition from his birth and childhood to that event, is merely introduced with the words: "And Moses grew, and he went out to see his brethren." And so the interval between his flight to Midian and his return to Egypt, an epoch of about the same duration, is passed over with silence, because a detailed history of those times would have thrown no light upon the progress of Israel as the chosen people. Both the bondage of the Hebrews in Egypt, the education and sojourn of Moses in Midian were times of preparation, the one for forming a people out of a family, the other for maturing the character and intellect of the chosen instrument of their mental and political elevation; but, as times of preparation, they required no specified description; and in this respect the historiography of the Bible is truly pragmatismal and teleological, composed throughout with strict regard to means and ends, causes and effects. And from the same motive, no doubt, many facts, even such as would have added to the glory of Israel, have been omitted by the sacred writer, because they would have distracted the attention from the aim of the narrative. But other reasons co-operated to cause that long period of 264 years to be but summarily adverted to. It is an acknowledged truism, that slaves have no history; for history consists in the development of individual faculties or political institutions; but without liberty there can be no progress. Thus the bondage offered no subject or materials for the historian, and although we have strong reasons to believe that the Hebrews remained during a very considerable portion of that period unmolested by the rulers and the people of Egypt, and that they continued undisturbed their nomadic and agricultural pursuits (see note to i. 11), yet this uniformity and even monotony of their occupations, re-

moved from the scenes of political warfare or social strife, excluded them from the annals of history. We can, on the whole, only describe the manners and customs, not write the history, of the Arabian Bedouins, although they are one of the most ancient tribes of the world. But, however *briefly* our text alludes to that long period, it does not treat it *defectively*; we find no feature wanting to represent to ourselves a complete picture of that interval; a simple subject requires but a few bold lines, and the division of the two Books (Genesis and Exodus), which is markedly indicated by the repetition of Jacob's genealogy, carries the reader over the gap of centuries.

III. THE EXODUS FROM EGYPT FIXED AFTER YEARS OF THE WORLD AND OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

We have hitherto only endeavoured to determine the principal events of our Book according to the absolute statements of the Bible, irrespective of the chronology of universal history, which is, however, indispensable for a clear understanding of that important period of Biblical history; for we can only comprehend and appreciate the significance of a historical fact by considering it in connection and relation with the other important synchronical events. Two points are chiefly to be examined:—1. In what year of the world, and before the vulgar era, the Exodus of the Israelites took place; and, 2. Under which Egyptian king that event happened.

1. As to the first question, we do not hesitate to adopt the usual Hebrew account, according to which the first year of the Christian era is the 3760th year of the world (repudiating that of Josephus, who gives a much larger number). Now we learn from 1 Kings vi. 1, that Solomon began the building of the temple in the fourth year of his reign, or 480 years after the Exodus; and as, according to modern chronological researches, Solomon reigned from 1015 to 975 B.C., it follows:—(a) that the Exodus took place in 1491 B.C. (viz. 1011 + 480); or, (b) in 2269 A.M. (viz. 3760 – 1491), i.e. about the time of the immigration of Danaus and Cadmus into Greece, with which, indeed, Diodorus of Sicily, brings the Exodus of the Israelites into connection.¹ Now we can easily, with the

¹ See *infra*, § 3, vi.

aid of the results established in the preceding remarks, fix the chronology of the chief events narrated in our book, namely:—

1. Jacob and his family immigrated into Egypt 1839 A.M. (viz. 2269–430) or 1921 B.C. (viz. 1491+430).

2. Jacob died 1856 A.M. (viz. 1839+17) or 1904 B.C. (viz. 1921–17).

3. Joseph died 1910 A.M. (viz. 1856+54) or 1850 B.C. (viz. 1904–54).

4. Moses was born 2189 A.M. (viz. 2269–80) or 1571 B.C. (viz. 1491+80).

5. The Exodus took place 2269 A.M., or 1491 B.C.

6. The Book of Exodus contains the history of 360 years, viz. from 1910 to 2270 A.M. or from 1850 to 1490 B.C.—The number 145 usually stated for this period is therefore erroneous.

We presume, that these computations will be found sufficient for our purpose; and we shall not be expected to enter here into the much vexed question concerning the shorter (Hebrew), and longer (Greek) chronologies, or the relation between the years of the world and those of the Christian era. The single fact, that the creation of the world is by some fixed at 3760 years before Christ (vulgar Hebrew account), whilst others put it down at 5508 B.C. (Dr. Hales, after Josephus), thus fluctuating within an interval of not less than 1748 years, this one fact will suffice to show the extreme uncertainty respecting this subject. We may, however, add, that the Hebrew computation, which is based on the Biblical statements, deserves the preference before the questionable alterations of the Septuagint and Josephus, and those who follow them.

2. The second question, “under which king the Israelites left the Egyptian dominions,” is, if possible, enveloped in still denser clouds; and it would be fruitless to fatigue the reader by leading him through the labyrinth of conflicting traditions and statements, of contradictory names and irreconcilable numbers; for there are scarcely two coinciding reports on the same subject in the vast and dry accounts of the Egyptian dynasties, and, after all the time and exertion spent on the investigation of this subject, we arrive, at the best, only at a sterile and unprofitable nomenclature, which increases very little the extent of our Biblical knowledge. We refrain, therefore, from repeat-

ing here our examination of the various and very diverging conjectures proposed with regard to that monarch; and think it the most advisable course to follow that account, which, by its antiquity and internal probability, has at present the greatest relative claims to our consideration. Josephus states, on the authority of Manetho, that the Israelites left Egypt during the reign of the King Ramses V., Amenophis, who was the last of the sixteen monarchs of the eighteenth (Diospolitanic) dynasty, and whose misfortune at the Red Sea might have caused the fall of his house. This statement agrees with other chronological dates connected therewith. For the three dynasties succeeding that which ended with Amenophis, viz. the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first, reigned, according to Julius Africanus, together, during 474, or, according to Eusebius, during 496 years. Further, Shishak (1 Kings xiv. 25), i.e. Sesonchis, the founder of the twenty-second dynasty, or that of the Bubastides, who reigned 21 years, ascended the Egyptian throne in the last part of Solomon's reign, who built the temple in the fourth year after his accession, or 480 years after the Exodus. Therefore, even according to the larger of the two numbers above cited (496), the Exodus may fall into the time of Amenophis, who reigned 30 years, according to Josephus (ch. 15), and 40 years, according to Eusebius. Champollion also arrived, by the study and combination of the ancient inscriptions, at the same result: "*La captivité dura autant que la XVIII^e dynastie, et ce fut sous Ramsès V. ou Aménophis, au commencement du XV^e siècle, que Moïse délivra les Hébreux.*" Authentic and valuable information on this and many other important archæological points may reasonably be expected from the study of the ancient sculptured monuments, which have already yielded many useful and interesting results pregnant of greater promise.

We conclude by summing up the results of our remarks :

1. The sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt lasted 430 years.
2. From the death of Joseph to the birth of Moses elapsed a period of 279 years.
3. The Exodus took place 2269 A.M. or 1491 B.C. ; and
4. Under Ramses V., Amenophis, the last king of the eighteenth dynasty.

§ 3. ACCOUNTS OF ANCIENT PROFANE WRITERS ON THE EXODUS.

The fates of the Israelites, connected as they were with the history of several important nations of antiquity, were too remarkable from the commencement, not to attract and arrest the attention of the ancient historians. It is true, few, if any, of the old writers were able to perceive in the *internal* life of the Israelites, and in the purity of their new doctrines, the incalculable influence which they exercised upon the course and development of universal history; but even the extraordinary *external* character of the destinies of the house of Jacob, which from a few ancestors, branched out into a numerous nation, powerful enough to extirpate or to subjugate the mighty tribes of Canaan; even these events, considered as a mere episode of history, were necessarily calculated to excite the interest of reflecting minds, and to attract even the curiosity of the more superficial observer. And thus we possess a variety of accounts furnished by ancient historians concerning the sojourn of the Israelites in, and their departure from, Egypt. But these narratives are mostly of a very singular nature. It is the privilege of individuals with carefully cultivated and trained intellects, to penetrate with an unbiassed and unprejudiced eye into the circumstances and habits of others, however differing from their own, to estimate their importance and character, and to form an accurate and calm judgment. This power of abstraction, or *objectivity*, was withheld from most of the ancient writers; they generally judge other polities after the notions prevalent in their own respective countries, condemning everything which is at variance with their ideas or institutions; and whilst they thus, on the whole, furnish authentic and accurate information concerning their own lands, their reports about foreign nations are generally disfigured by erroneous and one-sided conceptions, and too often distorted by prejudice, national antipathy, and religious animosity. This is, in general, also the character of the profane accounts of the Exodus of the Israelites; but they are, nevertheless, both interesting and important, for it is certain that none of them is in any way derived from the Bible; they are original information, taken from different other sources, especially, no doubt, from Egyptian records; and although they repre-

sent the events in a fanciful and exaggerated manner, they certainly corroborate the narrative of the Bible in every essential particular, which agreement must give additional authority to the sacred records, even in the eyes of those who are accustomed to value their religious importance higher than their historical accuracy.

We shall introduce those profane accounts, mostly in literal translations, or, if they are too lengthened, in abridgments, and shall only, when necessary, add a few remarks on their character and trustworthiness, as the reader will himself easily observe the deviations from the sacred narrative.

I.—MANETHO (usually believed to have lived as the chief of the priests of Heliopolis, about 280 B. C., in the reigns of Ptolemy Lagi and Philadelphus) relates: "The Egyptian king, Amenophis, wished, on the advice of an oracle, to purify the country of 80,000 leprous Jews, and sent them into the quarries on the east side of the Nile,¹ but later, he assigned to them, as their abodes, the town Avaris,² which had been quitted by the Hyksos, and which was consecrated to Typhon. There they chose Osarsiph, a priest of Osiris, from Hieropolis, who was later called Moses,³ as their leader; he gave them new and strict laws, commanded them to abandon idolatry, to kill and eat all animals held sacred among the Egyptians, and to associate with nobody except their own brethren, in order thus to estrange them from Egyptian customs. Osarsiph then fortified the town of Avaris, and made all military preparations for an attack against the Egyptians; he further sent ambassadors to the Hyksos, who had been expelled by the preceding king, Thummoris, and were then living in Jerusalem. The Hyksos, tempted by the promise, that Avaris, which had formerly been in their possession, should be restored to them, came to their aid with 200,000 men. Amenophis, although he was at the head of 300,000 men, did not dare to accept battle, but retreated to Memphis, and went then, with many ships, and a great army, to Ethiopia, where he found a hospitable reception from the king, his friend. The Hyksos [whom Manetho calls Solymites] made, in the mean time, great devastations in Egypt, burnt towns and villages, destroyed the images of the

¹ Compare Exod. i. 11, 14; v. 6 *et seq.*

² See note on i. 11, *sub* Raamses.

³ See note on ii. 10.

gods, and killed the holy animals of the Egyptians; but when Amenophis returned, after thirteen years, he defeated both the Hyksos and the Jews, and pursued them to the boundaries of Syria." We observe, on this account: 1. The fable about the leprosy of the Israelites, which, it is asserted, made them especially hateful in the eyes of the Egyptians, and which myth has been repeated even by modern writers, may perhaps be reduced to the miracle of the leprous hand of Moses, narrated in *Exod. iv. 6, 7*, and the sixth plague, that of boils (*Exod. ix. 8—12*), with which it was erroneously supposed the Israelites were infested, who spread the disease, by contagion, among the Egyptians. It is, on the contrary, evident, from *Deut. xxviii. 27*, that the Egyptians are chiefly subject to that epidemic, a fact which is confirmed by many other accounts.¹ Moreover, the tenor of Manetho's story itself shows, that not the leprosy of the Israelites, but their dangerous position, induced the Egyptians to hostile measures. But this does not prevent us from admitting, that the Israelites also were not quite free from that disorder so common in Egypt, especially if we consider their oppressed social condition; which fact is besides corroborated by the minute precepts of the Mosaic law respecting the treatment of that disease. 2. The statement, that Moses (Osarsiph) was a priest of Osiris, is a fiction, although it has been repeatedly advanced.² 3. That the Hyksos, after having once been expelled from Egypt, had been called back by the Israelites to assist them against the Egyptians, is improbable in itself, and is at variance with other historical facts.³ 4. The Hyksos (Solymites) cannot be imagined to have dwelt in Jerusalem so early as the time of the Exodus. 5. The Egyptian king may have pursued the Israelites northwards; but it is incredible that he should have followed them to the frontier of Syria; unless we understand thereby either the mere direction thither, or take Syria in its later sense, as comprising Palestine also. But, notwithstanding all this, the following facts are evident from that account:—1. The Israelites were compelled by the Egyptian king to hard labour, and were treated and persecuted as enemies. 2. Moses led them from Egypt. 3. Their Exodus was connected with a tem-

¹ See note on *ix. 8*.² See note on *ii. 10*³ See note on *i. 8*.

porary ruin of the Egyptian power. 4. Moses gave to the Israelites laws, enjoining monotheism as the fundamental principle, and severely interdicting idolatry, and every connection with pagan nations. 5. The war between Pharaoh and the Israelites was partly a religious one, for, according to the Biblical narrative also, the doctrine of monotheism unfolded itself in the Hebrew nation, on the Egyptian soil, and in opposition to Egyptian animal-worship (see viii. 22).

II.—CHAEREMON (in the first half of the first century of the vulgar era; lived long in Alexandria, where he was chief librarian, and occupied himself much with Egyptian antiquities), narrates, in his *History of Egypt*: “Amenophis, exhorted by apparitions of the goddess of Isis, expelled 250,000 lepers, under their leaders Moses and Joseph, whose original Egyptian names were Tisithen and Peteseph. When they arrived at Pelusium they met a great number of people (380,000 men), whom Amenophis had refused to admit into Egypt. They joined them, marched back to Egypt, and caused Amenophis to flee to Ethiopia. But his wife, whom he had left in Egypt, bare, shortly afterwards, a son, who, when arrived at maturity, drove the Israelites to Syria, whereupon his father returned from Ethiopia.” Without essentially deviating from the chief facts narrated by Manetho, this account of Chaeremon adds some new inaccuracies to those of his predecessor:—
1. Joseph and Moses are represented as contemporaries;
2. the number of the Hyksos rises from 280,000 to 380,000.

III.—LYSIMACHUS (of Alexandria, later than Chaeremon, author of several historical works, relates: “A great famine having befallen Egypt, king Bocchoris was commanded, by an oracle of Ammon, to drown the leprous Israelites, and to send the rest into the desert. The latter, after a night of fasting and consultation, were advised by Moses to proceed, and to overthrow all temples and altars on their way. They followed his council, arrived after many tribulations in Judea, built here a town, Hierosyla (so denominated from their plundering the temples), but changed its name later into Hierosolyma.” We observe:—1. The drowning of the Israelites is probably nothing but the exposing of the Hebrew children in the Nile. 2. The night of fasting and

consultation refers most likely to the evening before the Exodus (xii. 32), and the rites of the Paschal-lamb; and 3. The destroying of the altars to commands, as those in xxiii. 24, etc. 4. The account about the name and the foundation of Jerusalem is entirely fabulous. 5. The Egyptian king, under whom the Israelites left the country, is here called Bocchoris, who is also mentioned by several other ancient historians. According to Diodorus, he lived about 900 B. C.; according to Manetho he belonged to the twenty-fourth dynasty; and Wilkinson dates the commencement of his reign at B. C. 812. This period is considerably too late for the Exodus, and was probably only adopted in an age in which the tendency prevailed to question the antiquity of the Hebrew nation.

IV.—ARTAPANUS (author of a history of the Jews, writes on the transit over the Red Sea:—"The Memphites relate, that Moses, being well acquainted with the country, watched the influx of the tide, and made the multitude pass through the dry bed of the sea. But the Heliopolitans relate, that the king, at the head of a great army, and accompanied by the sacred animals, pursued after the Jews, who had carried off with them the wealth of the Egyptians; and Moses, having been directed by a Divine vision to strike the sea with his staff, touched the water with it, and so the fluid divided itself, and the hosts passed over the gulf as on a dry path. But when the Egyptians tried the same, and pursued them in the bed of the sea, it is said that fire flashed against them in front, and the sea, returning to its old place, overwhelmed them in the passage. Thus the Egyptians perished both by fire and by the reflux of the tide."

V.—STRABO (between about 66 B.C. and 25 A.C.) gives the following account:—"The most generally received opinion is, that the Israelites are descendants of the Egyptians; a certain Moses, a priest, dissatisfied with the state of things in Egypt, emigrated, accompanied by many who worshipped the Deity." That the Hebrews are represented as descendants of the Egyptians, may originate in the circumstance, that the family of Joseph, who married the daughter of an Egyptian priest (Gen. xli. 45), could in some respects be considered as Egyptian. According to Strabo, the Hebrews left Egypt with their free will, whilst the other profane historians describe the Exodus generally as an expulsion.

VI.—DIODORUS (of Sicily, in the time of Caesar and Augustus) relates, that “Antiochus Epiphanes, after having taken Jerusalem, was most urgently entreated, by many of his friends, to destroy that town, and to devastate the whole country. For the Jews, they said, were a people which alone of all other nations, repudiates every alliance or friendship with others; their forefathers had been expelled from Egypt as impious men, and as creatures hateful to the gods, especially on account of their leprosy, and had then settled in the vicinity of Jerusalem.” But in another passage he writes, that “a pestilence once broke out in Egypt, in consequence of the many foreigners who refused to revere the native gods; these strangers were therefore expelled; the more distinguished and vigorous of them emigrated, under the leadership of Danaus and Cadmus, to Greece, whilst the rest marched, under Moses, to Judea, which was at that time quite desolate, but where Moses built Jerusalem and the temple, and organized the state by peculiar laws.” The chronology is here stated with correctness, but, in all other respects, these two accounts of Diodorus share the mistakes of both Manetho and Chaeremon; and the invidiousness with which the Israelites are mentioned must be attributed to the spirit of intolerance peculiar to that time, and to the hostile disposition of Antiochus Epiphanes, who vied with Pharaoh in cruelty against the Jews and surpassed him.

VII.—APION (about 40 A.C., who follows Lysimachus) says:—“That Moses, of Heliopolis, led leprous, lame and blind Jews out of Egypt, in the first year of the seventh Olympiad, in which he asserts, the Phoenicians built Carthage, and arrived, after a journey of six days, safely in Judea.” Josephus, who severely criticises and ridicules this fabulous statement of Apion, remarks, concerning the chronology, that Hiram, the contemporary of Solomon, lived above 150 years earlier than the building of Carthage.

VIII.—The most remarkable is the account given by TACITUS, perhaps the most eminent historian of antiquity, whose sagacity, impartiality, and calm estimation of the circumstances and events, generally entitle him to be considered as a most competent authority, but who advances, with regard to the Israelites, nearly the same confused fables which Lysimachus offers, although it must have

been very easy for him, considering the time in which he lived (60—117 A.C.) to obtain the most authentic information concerning that remarkable nation. He first enumerates (Hist. v. 2) the different ancient opinions concerning the origin of the Jews, who are described either as *Cretans*, (Ideans, from mount Ida), or as *Egyptians*, (who had immigrated in the time of Isis, and escaped under the leadership of Hierosolymus and Judea), or as *Ethiopians* (who left their land in the reign of Cepheus), or as *Assyrians* (a wandering tribe, which once took possession of a part of Egypt, but soon found undisputed abodes in Palestine), or as the *Solymi*, mentioned in Homer, who called the city which they built Hierosolyma, from their own name. Then he continues, about the Exodus (v. 3): "Very many historians agree, that a hideous pestilence having broken out in Egypt, king Bocchoris, eager to obtain a remedy, consulted the oracle of Hammon, which commanded him to purify the land by expelling into other countries that people (the Israelites) which was hateful to the gods. They were, therefore, gathered from all parts, and being driven into a dreary desert, and breaking out into despair and lamentations, Moses alone, of all the exiles, exhorted them not to expect any assistance, either from the gods or from men, as they had been deserted by both, but only to trust themselves to him as a celestial leader by whose aid they had already conquered their present miseries. They assented, and commenced, in perfect ignorance, their planless march." The affinity of this narration of Tacitus with the account of Lysimachus will be easily perceived, and as to his conjecture concerning the descent of the Israelites from Crete, Egypt, Ethiopia, or Assyria, this contradictory uncertainty alone is sufficient to make it highly questionable, although the fourth account representing the Hebrews successively as Assyrian emigrants, sojourners in Egypt, and conquerors of Palestine, agrees essentially with the Biblical narration. But these notices are to us an interesting and warning instance with what careful consideration the remarks of ancient writers concerning the origin and history of foreign nations are to be read and used.¹

¹ The origin and character of the Christians are not treated with greater consideration by Tacitus, who narrates, that Nero charged with having caused the conflagration of Rome "those who are commonly called

IX. JUSTINUS (in the beginning of the fifth century, A.C., whose work is an abridgment of the Universal History of Trogus Pompeius, who flourished in the time of Augustus) relates: "The Jews are descended from Damascus, king of Syria, among whose successors were Abraham and Israhel [Israel]. The latter had ten sons, among whom he distributed the empire, which he ordered to be henceforth called Judea, from Juda, who had died immediately after the division. His youngest son was Joseph, whom the brothers, apprehending his superior genius, sold into Egypt, where he soon by his wisdom, and especially his skill in interpreting dreams, rose high in the king's favour, and by his agricultural arrangement saved the land during a protracted period of sterility. His son was Moses, who was, not only distinguished by erudition, but also by striking beauty.¹ But when the Egyptians suffered from leprosy and tetter, they expelled him with the infected persons from the territories of Egypt, lest the disease should spread still further. He took furtively the sacred implements of the Egyptians with him;² the latter, to recover them, pursued the Jews with an army, but were compelled by a tempest³ to return. [Then follows the strange explanation of the Sabbath as a fast-day, see notes on xx. 8–11, p. 272, and of the laws interdicting communication with heathens; and he concludes]: After Moses, his son Aruas [Aaron], who had been priest in Egyptian temples, succeeded as king; and since then it became customary among the Jews, that their kings performed at the same time sacerdotal functions." We remark: 1. The origin of the Israelites from Syria coincides with one account of Tacitus. 2. That Abraham and Israel were reported as kings of Syria, may have been occasioned by

Christians, and who were *hated for their disgraceful conduct*. Christus, the founder of that name, was put to death as a criminal by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea, in the reign of Tiberius: but the *pernicious superstition*, repressed for a time, broke out again, not only in Judea, where *the mischief* originated, but through the city of Rome also, whither all things horrible and disgraceful flow, as to a common receptacle." We find here, in an unusually repulsive form, the same inveterate animosity and blind hatred which pervade the accounts of the heathen writers on the religion of the Israelites. The Christians were, indeed, long held in the same abhorrence as the Jews, from whom they had sprung; and the persecution which Claudius ordered against the Jews included, as a matter of course, the Christians also.

¹ See ii. 2.

² See note on iii. 21, 22.

³ xiv. 21.

the fame of their great wealth (Gen. xii. 5; xiii. 2, 5; xiv., etc.; compare xiv. 15, and xv. 2). 3. The *ten* tribes and the name *Judea* are confused notions from the later times of the divided empire. 4. Joseph and Moses are, as in the account of Chaeremon (see ii.), brought into a close chronological connection. 5. The statement, that the kings of Israel performed at the same time pontifical functions is not correct, and may be the result of a misconception of the *theocratical* institutions of Israel.¹ 6. The author reports nothing about the fate of the other nine sons of Israel and their descendants, and about their connection with the returning progeny of Joseph.—The other inaccuracies in Justinus' account are too obvious to require comment.

All these accounts combined, however scanty and contradictory they are, have yet that incalculable importance, that they confirm and raise beyond the shadow of a doubt, the great and momentous events which form the chief interest of our book, and that they, on the other hand, just by their confusedness, show the lucidity and authenticity of the Biblical relation in a clearer and more advantageous light.

¹ See note on xix. 6; compare, however, also note on ii. 16.

THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES

CALLED

EXODUS.

CHAPTER I.

SUMMARY.—The seventy individuals, who had immigrated into Egypt in the time of Jacob, increased, in the course of some centuries, to such a numerous people, that a later Pharaoh from another dynasty, ignorant or unmindful of the important services Joseph had rendered to the Egyptian monarchy, and fearful lest the Hebrews join his political-internal-enemies, and leave the land, to his great disadvantage, devised various despotic plans for their diminution: first he tried to exhaust their energies by severe and excessive labour; then he ordered the midwives to kill all male children; and, lastly, he charged all his subjects to watch that every new-born boy be thrown into the Nile.

NOW these are the names of the children of Israel, who came into Egypt with Jacob; ¹*every* man came with his household. 2. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, 3. Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, 4. Dan,

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Every man and his household came with Jacob.

1. The events related in the first chapter, from the death of Joseph (Gen. 1. 26) to the marriage of Amram and Jochebed, comprise a period of 264 years (see *Introduction*, § 2. II), viz. from 1910 A.M. to 2174 A. M. (or 1850 B. C. to 1586 B. C.), (see *Introduction*, § 2. III). As the history of the descendants of Jacob in Egypt is about to be related, the sons of that patriarch are again enumerated, a complete list of all the members of his family at the time of their immigration into Egypt having already been given in Genesis xli. 8–27. That genealogy is further repeated here, in order to indicate, in the most striking manner possible, the commencement of the new epoch in the history of the progeny of Abraham.—*Now these are.* Ebn Ezra connects the conjunction *now* with Genesis i. 23, where the progeny of Joseph is alluded to; Salomon (“The

Pentateuch Translated and Explained”) with the promises contained in Gen. i. 24, 25. It indicates certainly the close connection between the two first books; as, in fact, the whole Pentateuch is intended as one continuous narrative.—*Every man came with his household.* In the word *house* the wives of Jacob’s sons and grandsons are not counted, for as Ebn Ezra remarks: “an individual *with* his wife, that only is the man.” The English version, scrupulously faithful to the tonic accents of the masoretic text, takes the words *with Jacob* to the second part of the sentence, thereby impairing the simplicity of the sense. None of the ancient versions offers a similar rendering.

2—4. Rashbam, in order to justify the partial repetition from Gen. xli. 8–27, thus explains the connection of these verses: “The descendants of Israel multiplied

and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. 5. And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls : and Joseph was in Egypt *already*. 6. And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation. 7. And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly,

prodigiously, *although* they were originally but 70 in number." Thus also Caben. The order, in which the sons of Jacob are enumerated, is: first the children of his wives Leah and Rachel, then those of their maid-servants Bilhah and Zilpah, and lastly Joseph, because he did not emigrate together with the other members of his family.

5. *That came out of the loins of Jacob*; a frequent scriptural metaphor for *begotten* by Jacob, or, his children, see Gen. xlvii. 26. About the *seventy* individuals who immigrated into Egypt, in Jacob's time, see Raphall's elaborate note to Gen. xlvii. 26, and note C. of the Appendix, where the opinion of Ebn Ezra, that the seventieth person (for the text enumerates only sixty-nine) is Jacob himself, although it might, at the first glance, appear, that he cannot appropriately be included among *those that came out of the loins of Jacob*, is convincingly defended against the tradition, according to which the number of seventy souls is completed by Jochebed (the mother of Moses), who is asserted to have been born precisely at the time of their entering Egypt, but who, if this opinion were correct, would, even according to traditionary chronology, have been 135 years old when she gave birth to Moses (see note to ii. 1). The Septuagint has seventy-five instead of seventy, as in Gen. xlvii. 27, where it arbitrarily adds five of the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh enumerated in 1 Chron. vii. 14—19. Besides this, the Septuagint exhibits in this verse another deviation from the usual text, viz., it *begins* the verse with the words: *and Joseph was in Egypt*.

6. *And Joseph died*, etc. This verse clearly resumes the thread of the narration from the point to which it had been carried on in the preceding book (i. 26), and repeats, therefore, briefly, the event

there stated: "So then Joseph died," etc. —*And all that generation*, comprising a rather protracted period of an indefinite number of years; for Levi survived Joseph by about twenty-five years, compare Gen. i. 26, and Exod. vi. 16.

7. The accumulation of the Synonyms (*were fruitful, increased abundantly, etc.*), peculiar to oriental idioms, is simply intended to express the utmost fruitfulness and increase; and we need therefore, not to adopt the distinctions which ancient commentators find in them (see Rashi, Ramban, Ebn Ezra, Abarbanel), although we easily concur in the opinion, that the verbs here used denote different *modifications* of the same fundamental notion, and that the Hebrew women gave birth to more than one child at one time (Ebn Ezra, twins; Rashi, six children). That this was not unfrequent in Egypt we learn from Aristotle (Hist. Anim. vii. 4): "Often the women bring forth twins, as in Egypt. They even give birth to three or four children at a time, nor is this of rare occurrence; but five is the highest number, and there have been instances of such fruitfulness." Pliny (Hist. Nat. vii. 3) observes: "That three are born at a birth is undoubted; to bear above that number is considered as an extraordinary phenomenon, except in Egypt, where the waters of the Nile are fructifying." Maillet (Description of Egypt, i. p. 18) ascribes this fertility to the uncommon salubrity of the air in Egypt.—Our text says, that *the land* was filled with the Israelites. It is impossible to understand hereby the *land of Goshen* alone, which comprises only the territory of the present province Esh Schurkiyeh, bordering, in the east, on the Arabian desert, and in the west, on the eastern branches of the Nile (see Robinson, Pal. i. p. 84, *et seq.*). For as, according to xii. 37, there were

and multiplied, and ¹grew exceedingly strong; and the land was filled with them.

8. Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Waxed exceeding mighty.

among the Hebrews 600,000 men capable of bearing arms, their whole population, including their wives, children and servants, must have amounted to between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 souls; and these cannot possibly have found abodes in the comparatively limited district of Goshen; the less so, if we consider that the Hebrews did not exclusively inhabit it, but that Egyptians lived among them, as appears from the words: "And every woman shall ask of her neighbour," etc. (iii. 22; see our note to ii. 5); and, from the distinct account in v. 12, where it is clearly related that the Hebrews were scattered over all the land of Egypt in order to seek straw for the manufacturing of bricks, we may safely infer that they were spread over the whole country.

S. Who knew not Joseph. Targum Onkelos translates: *who did not sanction the measures introduced by Joseph*; similarly Targum Jonathan and Jerusalem: "*who did not regard Joseph, nor observe his laws.*" The Talmud (Sotah 11a., where the whole passage from verse 8, to the beginning of the next chapter is explained) mentions the different opinions of Rab and Schemuel on the meaning of the "*new king*," the one understanding thereby literally another monarch, the latter only a crisis in the life and fates of the old sovereign. But although the Hebrew verb here used (יָדַע) has sometimes the signification of "*to care, to be mindful*," it is here much more naturally to be understood in its usual and literal sense, *to know*. Nor is it necessary to have recourse to the talmudical interpretation (quoted by Rashi), "*he feigned to know nothing of Joseph's merits*," or to that of Clarke and others, "*he disapproved of his system.*" From the circumstance that our text has "*a new king*," and not "*another king*," and from the expression, "*Now there arose*" (see Judges ii. 10; Psalm lxxviii. 6), we may

conclude, that *the new king* was not simply a successor of that Pharaoh whom Joseph had served as grand vizier, but that both were from *different dynasties*; which, in the earlier periods of Egyptian history, changed in rapid succession. Till the times of Sesostriis (about 1450 B.C.) Egypt was not united under one mighty ruler, but it consisted of almost as many states as it comprised cities, or at least districts, without connection or unity. Although Thebes maintained, during a long epoch, a predominant influence, it had constantly to resist the dangerous and powerful rivalry of Memphis, which became, later, even the chief residence of the Egyptian kings, and to repel the hostilities of many other colonies, which, mostly founded and governed by priests, had sufficient resources to maintain their autonomy. These facts render the unravelling of the Egyptian history of this period, fabulous in itself, a matter of paramount, if not insuperable, difficulty, as the lists of kings which are preserved to us by Herodotus, Diodorus, Manetho and Eratosthenes, do not exhibit the *successive* rulers of *one* monarchy, but to a great extent the *contemporary* sovereigns of *different* smaller states, and we should almost consider an authentic enlightenment on this point hopelessly lost, in our time, were it not improper ever to despair of the possible results of scientific researches. But it will readily be perceived, from this dismemberment of the Egyptian territory, that foreign invaders could, without difficulty, attack and subdue the one or the other of those monarchies, and that their mutual jealousy encouraged such invasions, and facilitated the triumphs of the invaders. To a similar conquest by foreign enemies we are naturally led by the tenor of our text, for only such *new king* could be ignorant of the most eminent services Joseph had rendered to the commonwealth, a cir-

not Joseph. 9. And he said to his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel *are* ¹ more numerous and

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—More and mightier.

cumstance which would be absolutely unaccountable in one of the immediate successors of the same pharaonic house. And none was more deeply indebted to the devotion and ability of Joseph than the crown of Egypt. For at the bottom of the simple and unpretending narrative of the last ten chapters of Genesis, the experienced historian will easily discover a fundamental change, if not an internal revolution, of the Egyptian constitution, far more in favour of the kings than of the people. The authority of the former was, before this period, weakened, and their energy shackled, by the increasing influence of the two first castes, that of the priests and the warriors, against whose power and presumption they could only find a weapon, if the resources of the people, hitherto left to their own development, were secured for the aggrandizement of the royal revenues. This great consummation was effected by the ingenious measures of Joseph, by which almost the whole of the landed property of the people passed into the hands of the king, and even their persons came into his dependence; a translocation of the inhabitants alienated them from the soil of their ancestors, thus severing all their connection with the past; and the tax of the fifth part of their income filled the exchequer of the king. Thus the Pharaohs gained an enormous amount of property; their power was consolidated; and they could now easily defy the arrogance of the privileged and prepollent classes. In a word, according to the narration of Genesis, the financial revolution caused by Joseph, brought all territories, except the property of the priests, into the possession of the crown, and the inhabitants were, henceforth, but the lessees of this royal property. Whatever the condition of the *people* might have been under such a change, is it in any way likely that the *kings* of the same dynasty, who followed that Pharaoh in

due course and legitimate succession, should have forgotten the infinite obligations they owed to Joseph, or that they should have been ignorant of his merits?

This suggestion of a *new* king, from *another* dynasty, which offers itself spontaneously and *a priori*, is fully corroborated by weighty testimonies of history. For Josephus (against Apion, i. 14) relates, on the authority of Manetho, that, at a time which would well agree with the event alluded to in our text, troops of common invaders coming from the east (ἐκ τῶν πρὸς ἀνατολὴν μερῶν), and supposed by many to have been Arabians, conquered Egypt, and subdued her rulers. That invading tribe was called by the Egyptians, *Hyksos* (Ἰκσῶς, i. e. βασιλεῖς ποιμένες), *shepherd-kings* (an appellation indicative of the contempt in which they were held by the Egyptians). After they had cruelly reigned in all Egypt, they elected a king of the name of Salatis. So far the account of Josephus. If we merely substitute the conquest of a part of Egypt (viz. of Lower Egypt, of which the land of Goshen formed a province) instead of the whole of Egypt, as we are, indeed, justified from Eusebius (Praep. Evang. ix. 27), we have, in these facts, a plausible narration of probable events; and if so, it is more than likely that Salatis was this *new* king alluded to in our text; he was not only *another*, but a *new*, a foreign king, unacquainted with, and naturally averse to, the partisans of the old dynasty. In such a new king alone the precautionary measures against the increase and influence of another tribe in the midst of his own dominions, are explicable, and receive their proper light (ver. 10). This view is further strengthened by the express remark of Josephus (Antiq. ii. ix. 1), that the Israelites were oppressed by the Egyptians, after the death of Joseph, *because the royal power had passed into another dynasty*. Bohlen raises the objection, that the biblical records speak

stronger than we. 10. Come then, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply and it come to pass, that, when

positively against the rule of a foreign tribe during the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt, "as they evidently describe the *native* Egyptians, with their non-semitic language, their aversion to shepherds and animal sacrifices, and their other well-known peculiarities." Without denying the truth and ingenuity of this remark, which would, however, much more apply to the time of Joseph and the patriarchs, than to the period of the "new king" in our text; it does in no way affect our supposition, as policy and prudence must have prescribed to the foreign usurpers the expediency of adopting the customs, and, in public transactions, the language of their new country, rather than of adhering to those of their native abodes; a system of accommodation especially practised by nomadic conquerors; as, for instance, the Mongols and Mantshus in China, and almost invariably traceable in all instances when the conquered nation was superior to the conquerors in civilization.

From this exposition, it is self-evident, that the opinion of those who (like Schloezer, Eichhorn, and others leaning on the erroneous conclusions of Josephus) believe that the Hyksos were the Israelites, is perfectly inadmissible and perverse, an opinion which, among other arguments, could easily be refuted by the fact that, from the text of the Bible, we are in no respect justified to consider the descendants of Jacob as invaders, or conquerors of Egypt. That the Hyksos are not identical with the Hebrews, is clearly obvious from Josephus against Apion, i. 26. It is the opinion of Champollion, that this "nation of shepherds" invaded, and took possession of Egypt, or a part thereof, *before* the immigration of Joseph, and even that of Abraham, and that the first monarch of the diospolitan, or 18th dynasty, is meant by our "new king." But this conjecture would also militate against all the historical and rational arguments urged in

our exposition. Winer, Jost, and Lengerke, likewise offer the supposition that the Hebrews settled in Egypt *during* the reign of the Hyksos, and that the new dynasty, alluded to in our text, seized the government, after having expelled the Hyksos. But the former author himself hints at the chronological difficulty of this conjecture, as, according to Eusebius, between the accession of Aphophis (in Joseph's time) and the death of Amenophis (at the exodus), only 392 years elapsed, which would differ from xii. 40, by about forty years. *Cahen* quotes a chronological computation from a Hebrew work, from which it would appear that between the death of Joseph, and the reign of the *new king*, a period of 59 years intervened. That calculation starts, however, from the erroneous supposition, that the birth of Moses was contemporary with the accession of that new king, whereas the same monarch must already have spent considerable time with the two first designs for the weakening of the Israelites anterior to the birth of Moses (see our notes to ver. 11 and 22). We cannot enter here more fully into the history of the Hyksos, and refer the reader for a more detailed exposition to *Heeren*, *Ideas*, ii. p. 577—586; *Hengstenberg*, the Books of Moses, and Egypt, p. 257—277, who is of opinion that the whole report about the Hyksos is an Egyptian fabrication; *Faber*, "On the Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. iii. book vi. chap. 5, who adopts the doubtful statement of Manetho (Josephus, c. Ap. i. 28) respecting a re-establishment of the Hyksos, 37 years after the death of Joseph, after they had once been expelled from Egypt, and settled in Philistia, 15 years before Joseph was sold into Egypt. (See our Introduction, § 3, i.).

9. "It is worthy of consideration, that the Egyptian king planned the means for crushing the power of the Israelites in common deliberation with his people, whilst the atrocious commands for check-

there happens any war, they join also with our enemies, and fight against us,¹ and go up out of the land. 11. There-

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And so get them up out of the land.

ing their miraculous increase, are ascribed to his own tyrannical impatience" (Jost). Josephus (*Antiq.* II. ix. 1) mentions, as the motives of Pharaoh's cruel devices against the Hebrews, besides fear, also jealousy and envy, for "he saw the Israelites thriving and even gaining an ascendancy over the Egyptians by their wealth, which they acquired by their temperance and activity." Abarbanel asks, "Were, indeed, the Israelites more numerous than the Egyptians? and, if so, why did the king fear them only in case of war, (ver. 10), and not likewise in peace, when they might have used their numerical superiority to attack him unexpectedly, and to subdue his people?" He is, therefore, of opinion, that the meaning of the verse is, "behold, the people of Israel are numerous, and of more robust constitutions than we." But this interpretation, which is grammatically forced, cannot be preferred to the usual explanation, which implies an admirable psychological feature—the natural exaggeration of fear and precaution (see Ps. cv. 24).

10 *Let us deal wisely with them*; that is, let us act with stratagem or precaution, for to massacre them openly, Pharaoh did not venture, on account of their multitude; not, as Abarbanel opines, because he shrunk from attacking a tribe which had sought refuge in his dominions; for the Egyptians were notorious for their inhospitality and aversion to strangers. Even Homer describes the cruelty of the Egyptians against strangers, whom they "either killed, or preserved alive, in order to use them for slavish works" (*σφίσιον ἐργάζεσθαι ἀνάγκη*, see *Od.* xiv. 272, xvii. 441). *That they join also with our enemies.* The enemies of the shepherd-kings of Arabian origin, were the old Egyptians, the secret adherents of the former dynasty, with whom the Hebrews had long lived in friendly connection, and the Thebans, whom they were unable to annihilate or

to subdue. The king feared, therefore, that the indigenous Egyptians might endeavour to shake off the foreign yoke by violent resistance, and obtain a powerful ally in the dissatisfied Israelites (see Rosenmüller). Hengstenberg supposes the enemies whom Pharaoh feared to have been the invading tribes of the Arabians, with whom the Israelites, who lived in the bordering district of Goshen, might make common cause for the overthrow of the Egyptian dynasty; see, however, our note to ver. 8. *And fight against us.* According to Manetho, the pastors occupied the delta of the Nile, whilst the Egyptians had been repelled to Thebais; the conquerors must, therefore, necessarily have feared that, at an attack of the Egyptians, the Hebrews might join them, and avail themselves of this confusion to quit the land. The Syrian and Coptic versions have "and expel us from the land." Mendelssohn translates: "that they fight against us, or at least leave the country." But it is evident, that the fear of Pharaoh was directed only to the latter possibility. The desire of the Israelites to return to the land of their ancestors, must, it appears, have become so strong that even the king of Egypt was informed thereof, and thought it necessary to devise plans to prevent the execution of their intention. "Every part of this declaration throws light upon the history, and serves to prove that the new king and his people were foreigners." Faber, iii. p. 553. We see in the words of our text no allusion to "laden with booty," as Maurer finds; but the king, although he apprehended the dangerous prolificacy and increase of the Hebrews, was unwilling to lose their very valuable gratuitous aid, which he greatly required for his gigantic architectural works (ver. 11). It was, besides, a point of national pride with the Egyptian despots, to execute their huge monuments and edifices by foreign workmen; and on one of the

fore they appointed over them task-masters, to afflict them with their burdens; and they built for Pharaoh ¹store

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Treasure cities.

majestic temples which the great conqueror Sesostris erected, he ordered the inscription to be conspicuously engraved: "No native Egyptian has been employed in constructing this building" (Diod. i. 56). This circumstance was, according to Josephus (Antiq. II. xii. 2), particularly alluded to by Moses, when God commanded him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt; "How shall I be able," said he, "to persuade Pharaoh to allow *them* to depart, who, by their labour, so materially contribute to the promotion of national prosperity?"

11. We deem it advisable to preface the history of the Hebrew bondage in Egypt with the following preliminary remark. We are not entitled to suppose that the oppression of the Israelites in Egypt commenced immediately after the death of Joseph. The historical accounts on this point fluctuate between 80 and 400 years. The latter period is evidently too protracted, and "perfectly unhistorical," as the sojourn of the Hebrews in Egypt amounted only to 430 years (xii. 40). According to our supposition (ver. 8), the *new* king is a monarch of the foreign (Arabian) tribe of the Hyksos, who, after their usurpation, thought it a matter of expediency and policy to oppress the Hebrews, and paralyse their energies. Their extraordinary increase, and their increase *only*, was, to him, an object of apprehension, and he devised measures to stay it. But can the Israelites, already one or two generations after Jacob, be supposed to have increased to any formidable multitude? The oppressive measures must, therefore, have begun considerably later, although the Hyksos might have invaded and conquered the country (or a portion thereof) at a much earlier date; so that the period of the real and severe thralldom of the Israelites in Egypt may be assumed as considerably shorter than is usually supposed, but at least 100 years

before the Exodus, see *Introd.* § 2, i. 1. Hales (II. i. 180) also believes that the Bible-chronology, which dates the commencement of the bondage of the Israelites immediately from Joseph's death, or 71 years after their settlement in Egypt, is in this point questionable, and he thinks that it ought to be dated at least 30 years, or one generation later, although one of his reasons, that the former period would be too small to bring Joseph into oblivion, is of no weight considering that a *new dynasty* followed on the Egyptian throne. So much may be unhesitatingly asserted, that the sufferings of the Hebrews were neither universal nor uninterrupted. "A general and perfect oppression of the Israelites in Goshen," says Jost (Hist. i. 76, 77) "did not take place. It is of importance to remark, that, except the few circumstances related in the Holy Books, no other fact is mentioned as an accompanying evil of that thralldom, so that the Egyptians appear to have had nothing in view but their own safety. Even the command to kill the new-born male children, seems not to have been executed (?) and was perhaps only intended as a threat. The duration of the oppression is unknown. . . . The Israelites continued, nevertheless, to be herdsmen and engaged in all occupations connected with such pursuits. In fact, there were always among them experienced workmen of every kind, as was manifest soon after their departure from Egypt. From all this we may conclude that the Egyptians neither robbed the property of the Israelites, nor intended their hostile destruction." In accordance with this view we read in Num. xi. 18, "it was well with us in Egypt," (see 1 Chron. iv. 21, 23; vii. 21—24).

The *superintendents of works* were the superior officers, to whom the task-masters were subordinated (see note to ch. v. 6). The tyrant of Egypt hoped to annihilate, by unremitting exertions

cities, Pithom and Raamses. 12. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and 'spread.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Grew.

and breathless labour, the energies and self-respect of the Israelites, so completely, that they would have neither the courage, nor the desire, nor the leisure, for planning schemes of deliverance. And justly remarks Aristotle (*Polit.* v. 11): "And it is also a policy frequently resorted to by tyrants, to make their subjects poor and miserable . . . so that their whole attention is absorbed in gaining their daily bread, and no time is left them to think of stratagems for their redemption." From a similar principle, Tarquinius Superbus constantly occupied the plebeians with the construction of trenches and sewers (*Liv.* i. 56). "Many of the Egyptian kings had, not a passion, but a fury, for building. To this propensity, however, Egypt owes a great number of monuments both of utility and embellishment." See note to ii. 10.—*Pithom*, a city in Lower Egypt, on the east of the Nile, most probably the same town which Herodotus (ii. 158) calls *Patumos*, the Arabian city near Bubastis, (now *Tell Basta*, in the vicinity of the village Benalhassar), which phrase may imply a town of Egypt situated near the Arabic (Red) Sea; but we are certainly justified to understand it of an Egyptian city built by, or under the direction of Arabians, so that from this side also the supposition of the reign of the Arabian Hyksos in Egypt would be unexpectedly corroborated. According to Champollion the original name of Pithom was *Thoum* (enclosed, surrounded by mountains), the syllable *Pi* being the Egyptian article. "It seems," says he, "that it was situated to the south of Bubastis, near the spot where Bilbeis stands now. Significant is the remark of Manetho, that the king Salatis fortified the eastern cities, and that he established a strong camp in *Avaris* or *Abaris* in which he placed 240,000 soldiers, and which Ewald sagaciously conjectures to be identical with the camp of the *Hebrews*, *Raamses*.

This town is to be distinguished from the land or province *Rameses*, mentioned in *Genesis* xlvii. 11 and *Exod.* xii. 37, and evidently identical with *Goshen*. It was built by the Israelites (not fortified, or re-built, as Gesenius and Rosenmüller are inclined to believe, for the Hebrew verb here used, does not admit of this interpretation), and received its name from the frequent appellation of the Egyptian Pharaohs, *Ramses* or *Rameses*, the Son of the Sun (a proud surname assumed by other oriental sovereigns also); and later, the whole province in which it was situated, was called *Rameses* (and in *Genesis* it is mentioned under this name by way of anticipation). *Jablonsky*, following the Arabic translation of Saadiah, believes *Raamses* to be identical with Heliopolis, which was formerly called *On*. But it appears from the Septuagint that *Raamses* and Heliopolis are two different towns. According to Niebuhr (*Travels*, i. p. 97), a village of the name of Ramsis is still to be found between Cairo and Alexandria; so also Champollion. But the towns mentioned in our text cannot have been situated on the west of the Nile, as no crossing over this river is related in the history of the Exodus of the Israelites. Some writers believe *Raamses* to be Heroopolis, but without any positive proof, merely leaning on the Septuagint version of *Gen.* xli. 28, 29. Lepsius (*Letters from Egypt*, etc. p. 438) remarks, "That we really have to seek for *Rameses* in the ruins of Abu-Keshed (north-east of Heliopolis) is most decidedly confirmed by a monument which was found among those very ruins as early as the time of the French expedition. It is a group of three figures cut out of a granite block representing the gods Ra and Tum, and between them the king *Ramses II.* (*Ramses-Miamus*, who begun the canal)." The Jerusalem Targum calls the two towns of our text *Tanis* and *Pelusium*, but both lie beyond

³ And they had a horror against the children of Israel. 13. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigour. 14. And they made their lives bitter with

¹ And they were grieved because of.

the district of Goshen, and as the Israelites assembled in Rameses before the Exodus (xii. 37; Num. xxxiii. 3, 5), we must most probably seek them in that province. However this may be, the situation of Pithom and Raames cannot, in general, be doubtful; they must have formed a part of Lower Egypt, in the east of the Nile, most apparently in the valley Vadi Tumilat, which is formed by the Nile and that chain of mountains which accompanies the Nile from the south to the north, and near the place where the canal began which combined the Nile with the gulf of Suez (Herod. ii. 158). This part of the country, which probably formed the most southern region of Goshen, was, on the eastern frontier, naturally exposed to the invasions from Arabia, and was, therefore, the chief quarter of the warrior-caste. Fortresses, used at the same time for corn-magazines, were thus, in these parts, not only advisable but indispensable (see 2 Chron. viii. 3—6, where the store cities are called “fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars;” *Heeren*, ii. page 609; *Ritter*, Geogr. p. 829).

12. *And spread.* The increasing number of Israelites were not confined to the comparatively limited district of Goshen, but they were used for the royal or public works almost throughout the whole of Pharaoh's dominions (see our note to ver. 7).

13. Ebn Ezra sees in this verse a certain progress in the relation of the miseries of the Hebrews; first they had to build vast edifices and fortified towns for Pharaoh (ver. 11); but when he saw that even not this slavish and exhausting occupation impeded their miraculous increase (ver. 12), he allowed all his subjects to use them as slaves, and to treat them with every possible cruelty (ver. 13); and when he perceived, to his amazement, that this measure also had

not the desired effect, he called the midwives, and gave them his barbarous and nefarious instructions (ver. 15).

14. In the latter part of this verse our translation varies from the English version, which renders “all their service, wherein they made them serve, *was* with rigour;” but this would be little more than a mere repetition of the preceding verse, and would, besides, imply a grammatical difficulty in the original text.—*Bricks*, or burnt tiles, made of white and chalky clay, when dried in the open air, assume an extraordinary hardness, and, according to Herodotus (ii. 136), even a pyramid (which probably still exists near Faioum, in the erection of which most likely the Israelites were employed, and a drawing of which is given in the *Déscription de l’Egypte*) was built of such bricks. “There is a hill near Cairo formed entirely of broken tiles and pottery. Popular tradition refers its origin to the Israelites, and names it Tel Youdeh, or ‘Hill of the Jews,’” (*Wilson*). See *Rosellini*, (*I Monumenti dell’ Egitto e della Nubia*, II. ii. p. 249, etc.), where is also given a highly interesting drawing, copied from the walls of a tomb near Thebes, and generally believed to represent the oppressed Israelites making bricks under the severe superintendence of the Egyptian taskmasters. Modern travellers (see *Wilkinson*, ii. 97) observe, that the bricks were, in Egypt, manufactured for the king or certain privileged persons. A vast number of strangers was always occupied in the brick-fields of Thebes, and other parts of Egypt. Josephus (*Antiq.* II. ix. 1) describes the labours of the Israelites as consisting in cutting canals, fortifying the cities with walls, raising dykes, and erecting pyramids. “Things are much the same now in the same country. Mehemet Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, obliged 150,000 men, chiefly Arabs from Upper Egypt, to work

hard bondage, in mortar and in brick, and with all manner of labour in the field, ¹ besides all their *other* labour, which they made them work with rigour. 15. And the king of Egypt spoke ² to the women, who served as midwives to the Hebrews; of whom the name of the one *was* Shiprah,

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—All their service, wherein they made them serve, *was* with rigour.

² Hebrew midwives.

on his canal connecting the Nile with the sea at Alexandria; 20,000 of the number perished during the progress of the work" (Pict. Bible). Carne, (Letters from the East, p. 71, 72), writes: "We cannot be insensible to the cries of suffering raised by the children, women, and old blind men, and cripples, who are condemned, under the terrors of the club, to the severest labours. Having ridden out, early one morning, in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, we suddenly heard the sounds of music from without, and perceived it was the Pashahimself, with his guard, who had just arrived from Cairo. He was on foot, and stood on the lofty bank of a new canal he was making, earnestly observing the innumerable workmen beneath. The bed of the canal below presented a novel spectacle, being filled with vast numbers of Arabs of various colours, toiling in the intense heat of the day, while their Egyptian taskmasters, with whips in their hands, watched the progress of their labour. The wages allowed these unfortunate people . . . were only a penny a day, and a ration of bread." Although Egypt is a highly fertile country, so much so that it is often called the universal store-house, and although the inundations of the Nile supersede the labours anterior to *sowing*, yet the soil requires a most careful and laborious cultivation by the aid of canals and other great draining preparations, and even now, very often, great numbers of workmen are employed to remove the morasses formed by the swellings of the Nile. To such hard and exhausting labours our text most probably alludes. About the difficulties with which the irrigation of the soil in Egypt is attended, we have an abundance of testimonies, of which we select here but the

following brief remarks. Baehr (on *Herod.* ii. 14) observes: "there is scarcely any country on the earth which requires, for the purposes of agriculture, so much human labour as Egypt." Michaud (Correspondence from the Orient, viii. p. 54) remarks: "The labour of ploughing is the least exertion for the agriculturists of Egypt. The greatest difficulty consists in draining the fields, and the strongest among the fellahs are employed to carry the water, and to execute the irrigations." Such exertions were especially indispensable in the northern parts of Egypt, which the Israelites chiefly inhabited, and thus Egypt was, not without reason, called *an iron furnace* (Deut. iv. 20. Jer. xi. 4); *a house of slaves* (Exod. xx. 2; Micah vi. 3); or, the *ignominy of Israel's youth* (Isa. liv. 4).

15. *To the women who, etc.* As Pharaoh could not possibly entrust to *Hebrew* women the execution of his plan aiming at the ultimate extirpation of their own race, we are compelled to suppose, with Josephus (Antiq. II. ix. 9), the midwives, not to have been of the Hebrew, but of the Egyptian nation; so that the first part of our verse is to be translated: "And the king of Egypt spoke to the women who served as midwives to the Hebrews," thus translate the Sept. (ταῖς μαῖαις τῶν Ἑβραίων) and Vulgate (obstetricibus Hebraeorum). The answer of the midwives in ver. 19, seems also to be favourable to our interpretation: "the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women," whom they, then, mostly delivered. The dispute in the Talmud, therefore, whether the two midwives mentioned were Jochebed and Miriam, or Jochebed and Elisheba, is superfluous. True, the names of the two midwives

and the name of the other Puah: 16. And he said, When you do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, ¹you shall look upon the basin; if it *be* a son, you shall kill him; but if it *be* a daughter, then she shall live.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And see *them* upon the stools.

appear to be of Semitic, not of Egyptian origin (שִׁפְרָה, splendour, beauty, from שִׁפְרָה, Arabic سَفَر, and פֹּעֵה, Arabic فَوْهَة); but as, according to our supposition, the king was one of the Arabic Hyksos, this circumstance offers no difficulty. But there is another objection, which has been urged with more apparent justice, and this concerns the *number* of midwives, two of whom could not possibly have sufficed for such a numerous people, which, about eighty years later, counted 600,000 men fit to bear arms (Exod. xii. 37), and 22,000 Levites (Num. iii. 39), and which, at the lowest estimate, must have consisted of 2,500,000 souls (see note to ver. 7). Ebn Ezra observes, therefore, “These two were the superintendents of all midwives; for there is no doubt that there were more than 500, and the former had to pay to the king a tax from their income.” Abarbanel questions this opinion, and offers the hypothesis, that Shiphrah and Puah are not proper, but appellative nouns, denoting the two chief operations necessary or customary at every childbirth, so that, in each of such cases, two midwives were employed, one of either of these two classes, and that an indefinite number of midwives might, therefore, have been in activity. However, the opinion of Ebn Ezra seems to be more conformable to our text, as there is no objection to suppose that the king gave his orders personally to *two* chiefs, or overseers, of the midwives.

16. *You shall look upon the basin.* The Hebrew word which we have translated with *basin* (*avnajim*) offers difficulties, and has called forth many different interpretations, which we have reviewed in the larger edition of this work. But we believe, that the most probable opinion is that of Gesenius, who

observes, “*avnajim* is a *washing-vessel of stone*, in which the Orientals used to wash new-born infants”; they appear to have resembled hand-mills, in being made of stones, the lower of which was hollowed, the upper serving as a lid. But the whole question is, in our opinion, completely set at rest by the remark of Thevenot (Travels, ii. p. 98): “The Persian kings order the new-born male infants of their relatives to be killed in the stone basins, in which the children, immediately after their birth, used to be washed, lest these offsprings, if allowed to live, become dangerous to their government.” What is here limited to the relatives of the kings, Pharaoh naturally extended to the whole Hebrew race. In the face of such evidence, we can attach but little importance to an observation in a memoir of M. Larrey, quoted by Cahen, who describes *avnajim* as a sort of stool (*fauteuil*). We add, merely for the sake of completeness, some other suppositions of modern critics, without being able to sympathise with them. Ewald translates, *on both wheels*, i. e. *speedily*, whilst Lee, Benary and Lengerke render “you shall be attentive to the two-fold possibility, whether the new-born child be a boy or a girl.” Commentators raise the objection, why the cruel command of the king was not extended to the new-born girls also (and Abarbanel urges, that his plans required the extirpation of the latter still more imperatively), which objection they answer in different ways. Rashi writes (adopting the words of Tanchuma): “he felt uneasiness at the boys only because his astrologers had foretold him, that a boy would be born fated to rescue the Israelites.” Abarbanel is of opinion that Pharaoh spared the women, in order to secure for himself, by their marriage with

17. But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, and saved the male children alive. 18. And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have you done this thing, and have saved the male children alive? 19. And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, ¹ Indeed, the Hebrew women *are* not as the Egyptian women; for they *are* ² vigorous: be-

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Because.

² Lively.

Egyptians, numerous soldiers and workmen; and Rosenmüller observes (on ver. 22) "the daughters could intermarry with other families." (See our note to ver. 11).

17. The midwives feared rather the punishment of God than the anger of Pharaoh. It proves the rule of a sacred Providence, "that tyrants are not always served faithfully" (*Salom.*). It will not be surprising, that the midwives, who were *Egyptians* (see note to ver. 15), are described as *fearing God*; this expression signifies merely piety and righteousness, and is applied even with reference to heathens (see Genes. xx. ii; Ps. ii. 2). Justly, therefore, remarks *Hengstenberg*, "It cannot be the intention of the author to express here the general notion of fear of God; for this was not the feeling, which guided the Egyptian midwives."

19. *Indeed* (י) *the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women.* The particle י might introduce here, as in many passages (and frequently in Greek ὅτι), the direct speech, and would, therefore, require no translation in English. But sometimes it stands elliptically instead of "by my life," or a similar protestation, and is then to be translated by *indeed, verily* (for instance Isa. xv. 1). And such emphasis appears appropriate in our passage, in which the midwives have to refute the criminal charge of disobedience to the royal command.—*For they are vigorous.* Rashi explains: "experienced like midwives;" similarly Targum Onkelos and others. The Talmud (*Sotah* 12) explains, "they resemble the animals of the field, which require no midwives," and it is added,

that the Jews are not unfrequently compared with animals (as *Judah is a lion's whelp*), etc. The most plausible explanation seems to be that of Ebn Ezra, "they have an extraordinary vitality, are exceedingly strong and *vigorous*." This explanation has been adopted by many interpreters. The rendering of the English version (for they are *lively*) does not meet the sense. — *Before the midwife comes unto them they are delivered*; therefore, said the midwives, we cannot kill the new-born children, as we were commanded to do this secretly at their birth (See *Mendels.*). About the facility with which the women are delivered in the East, we read in Chardin's manuscript notes: "There are, in Asia, large districts in which no midwives are to be found, and even if some live there they are little known, for mothers assist their daughters, and often female relatives or neighbours fill the place of the former. In Karman, I saw a woman who was delivered without any assistance in the open field, three hours from a village; and, to my great surprise, she arrived not much later in the town where I was. The people there smiled at my astonishment, remarking that similar cases were very frequent in their country." — "Oriental women suffer little from parturition; for those of better condition are frequently on foot the day after delivery, and out of all confinement on the third day. They seldom call midwives, and when they do, they are sometimes delivered before they come to their assistance; the poorer sort, while they are labouring or planting, go aside, deliver themselves, wash the child, lay it in a

fore the ³midwife comes unto them, they are delivered. 20. Therefore God did well to the midwives; and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. 21. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that He made them houses. 22. And Pharaoh charged all his

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Midwives.

clout, and return to work again" (*Dr. Paxton's Illustrations of Scripture*, i. p. 462). Clarke extends this facility of parturition to all parts of the globe, where the women labour hard, and especially in the open air.

20. "The first part of this verse is a real summary, which finds its explanation in the following verse" (*Glaire*).

21. *That He made them houses.* The pronoun *them* refers to the midwives, although the Hebrew text has here a *masculine* form, according to an idiom explained in the larger work. Another uncertainty is the meaning of *houses*. The Talmud (and Rashi accordingly), which, as we have observed, on ver. 15, believes Jochebed and Miriam to have been the midwives, explains: God determined to make them the mothers of priests, Levites, and kings. But we have proved that we are, from internal reasons, compelled to consider the midwives as Egyptians, and we are, therefore, of opinion, with Rosenmüller, Philippson and others, that *house* is used here, as frequently in other passages, in the sense of *family* (for instance ii. 1), and the meaning would be, God increased and strengthened the families of the midwives as a reward for their piety. The sense will, however, be still more distinct and powerful, if we take *house*, as is usual in oriental phraseology, as a symbol of well-established prosperity, firmly rooted happiness; so that the words of our text would imply the meaning: God blessed the midwives with every felicity. This explanation receives the fullest corroboration from 2 Sam. vii. 27, 29, where the promise "I will build thee a house" is explained and qualified by the words "to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee."

22. *Every son that is born.* Targum Onkelos renders "Every son that will be born to the Hebrews;" and similarly Targum Jonathan; the Sept. adds also *τοῖς Ἑβραίοις*; but not so the rabbinical tradition, according to which *all* children, both of the Egyptians and Hebrews, were to be thrown into the Nile, as the astrologers of Pharaoh had predicted that the deliverer of the Israelites was about to be born, without being able to inform him whether he would be an Egyptian or a Hebrew. The probability is, however, undoubtedly on the side of the Targumim; see our introductory note to ver. 11. It is remarkable, that Pharaoh ordered the Nile to be infested with so many human corpses, as that river was, on the one hand, devoutly worshiped as a superior deity (see on vii. 15) and, on the other hand, its tasteful floods (the more acceptable as they were the only drinkable water in Egypt) were the delight and the pride of the Egyptians (see on vii. 18). Clarke and Osburn conjecture, but with little plausibility, "that Pharaoh intended the young Hebrews as an offering to his god, the Nile."

If we glance once more at the different means which Pharaoh devised for the oppression and diminution of the Hebrews, we find that they imply the following climax of severity and cruelty: he first endeavoured to break their energy by labour and hardship (ver. 11–14), then to effect their diminution by killing the new-born male children through the midwives (ver. 15, 16); and when neither of these plans had the desired result—the former in consequence of the unusual robustness of the Hebrew women, the latter owing to the piety and compassion of the midwives—he tried to execute his design by drowning the young children

people, saying, Every son that is born you shall cast into the river (Nile), but every daughter you shall save alive.

(ver. 22); which last device was in two respects more audacious and impious than the second; first, because he now, laying aside all shame, showed publicly his despotism against a harmless foreign tribe, which relied on the hospitality

solemnly promised to them; and, secondly, because now the *whole people* were let loose against the Hebrews; spying and informing was made an act of loyalty, and compassion stamped as high-treason.

CHAPTER II.

SUMMARY.—Jochebed bore to Amram a son, who, after having been hidden by the parents during three months, was exposed in the Nile. He was seen and saved by the daughter of Pharaoh, who called him Moses, and adopted him as her son. Grown older, he killed an Egyptian who had ill-treated a Hebrew; and when the report of this deed reached Pharaoh, Moses was obliged to flee; he went to Midian, where he married Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel; she bore him two sons, Gershom and Eliezer. A new Pharaoh, who, during the protracted sojourn of Moses in Midian, had succeeded to the throne, aggravated still more the oppression of the Hebrews; their cries ascended to God, who was mindful of the Covenant made with their ancestors.

AND there went a man from the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. 2. And the woman

1. *A daughter of Levi*; i. e. one from the tribe, or the descendants of Levi, as the Sept. correctly translates (ἐκ τῶν θυγατέρων Λεβί). The names of Moses' parents, which are here omitted, are fully stated in vi. 20: "And Amram took Jochebed his father's sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses" (see Justin. xxxvi. 2). According to the literal tenor of the text Amram, the son of Kohath, was the grandson of Levi, and he married, therefore, his father's sister, the daughter of Levi, or his aunt. Although such alliance is forbidden by the Mosaic law (Lev. xviii. 12), it was,—according to Abarbanel—predestined by the special providence of God; besides, *before* the legislation on Mount Sinai, such marriages were *not* unlawful. The Septuagint, however, thought it necessary to translate there *aunt* with "his uncle's daughter," or his cousin; an unjustifiable deviation from the text, which, however, is approved by Ewald (Antiq. p. 175, note 1). Ebn Ezra remarks, here, what he more appropriately would have re-

served to that passage in Leviticus: "Those are not correct, who remark, that the produce of a field, sown on another field thrives, whilst if sown on the same field it does not thrive; for the principal object of these prohibitions is chastity, by which the Israelites shall become a holy nation" (see however, on this verse, *Introduction*, § 2, i.). According to the opinion of several ancient commentators, as Rashi, Jochebed was 130 years old when she bare Moses; for they follow the tradition that she was born exactly at the time of the immigration of Levi into Egypt (see note to i. 5); the whole duration of the sojourn of the Israelites there, they assert, was 210 years; Moses was 80 years of age at the time of the Exodus (vii. 7); and $210 - 80 = 130$. But this would imply a wonder by far more miraculous than that of Sarah, who laughed sceptically at the idea of being a mother at the age of 90; and no circumstance is mentioned in our text to indicate that such a miracle took place. More plausible is, therefore, the opinion of Abarbanel, who, rejecting that

conceived, and bare a son: ¹ and she saw that he *was a goodly child*; and she hid him three months. 3. And when

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And when she saw... she hid.

tradition concerning the birth of Jochebed in the *literal* sense (and assigning to it a symbolical meaning) asserts, that Levi was, at the time of the immigration into Egypt about 44 years old; that Jochebed was born to him 26 or 36 years later, and as Moses was 80 years old at the departure from Egypt, she bore him between the age of 50 and 60, which would not be extraordinary or astonishing. However, this calculation is erroneous, for he computes $210 - (44 + 26 + 80) = 60$; but the 44 years, being the age of Levi at the period of immigration, cannot be taken into account, as they have no reference to the birth of Moses by Jochebed, who thus would yet, after this calculation, become mother at the unusual age of 100 or 110 years. This difficulty might simply be removed by the supposition that Jochebed was born 70 or 80 years after the immigration (for Levi attained the age of 137 years, see vi. 16, thus living 93 years after that event): so that Jochebed would have been between 50 and 60 years old at the time of the birth of Moses; see, however, on this whole subject our above-quoted exposition, in the *Introduction*. The edict of Pharaoh ordering the male children of the Israelites to be cast into the Nile, must have been enforced a considerable time after the marriage of Amram and Jochebed, as their daughter Miriam was at the birth of Moses already an adult virgin (עלמה, ver. 8), and Aaron, who was three years older than Moses, does not appear to have been exposed to any danger at his birth, of which, therefore, no mention is made in our text. According to a tradition that edict was in force during $3\frac{1}{2}$ years (See Abarb. on chap. i. at the end).

2. Rashbam justly refutes the usual translation: "and when she saw him that he was a goodly child" for Jochebed, the mother, would have been perfectly as anxious for the preservation of her child, had it been less fine or

less strong. That interpretation would, indeed, almost remind us of the barbarous custom of the Spartans, who killed their children if they did not appear to them sufficiently robust. Therefore, the two parts of this verse must not be brought into a causal connection, but are simply co-ordinate: "and she regarded him, that he was a goodly child, and she hid him three months." We can, thus, not even approve of Rosenmüller's mitigated expression: "Misericordiam auxit, ut solet, infans forma eximia."

3. The Egyptians used the marsh rush (*papyrus nilotica*) to make garments, shoes, baskets, and utensils of various kinds, especially boats. "It is distinguished by its cluster of elegant little spikes, which consist of a single row of scales, ranged in a straight line on each side. These clusters are weak, or hang down in a nodding position, and, unlike the rest of the plant, are inapplicable to any useful purpose. The root is about the thickness of a full sized man's wrist, and more than fifteen feet in length, and so hard that all kinds of utensils were made of it. The reed-like triangular stem is about four cubits, or six feet long, was eaten raw, roasted, or boiled, and served as material for boats, sails, mats, clothes, beds, and books" (Pict. Bibl.). It is further known, that the inner rind was manufactured into a writing material, called *paper*, from this plant. One of the modes of preparing it, according to Pliny, was this:—"The fine pellicles, which divided naturally, were slit into flakes, and being laid upon a table, were pressed together, the glutinous juice of the plant binding it, so that when it was dried, it became fit for use."—"The durable qualities of this material have been tested by the discovery of Egyptian and Greek manuscripts, written on papyrus, which can be unrolled or handled without injury, after having been

she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with ¹ bitumen and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Slime.

deposited in the cases of mummies or in earthen jars, in the tombs of Egypt, for many long centuries."—*Bitumen* boils up from subterranean fountains like oil or hot pitch, in the vicinity of Babylon, and also near the Red Sea; it afterwards hardens through the heat of the sun; it is also collected on the surface of the Dead Sea, which hence receives the name of *Lacus Asphaltites*. It receives its name either from its *boiling up* from the fountains (see Gen. xix. 19), or from *redness*, the best kind being of that colour. From this description it will be evident, why we have substituted in our translation *bitumen* instead of *slime*, which the Engl. Version offers. The ark was daubed with bitumen from within, in order to protect the child from the sharp bulrushes; and with pitch from without, in order to prevent the water from penetrating into the ark. The chest was placed in the *flags* (*alga nilotica*) called by the Egyptians, *sari*. *Pliny*, H. N. xiii. 23, describes it thus:—"The *sari* grows in the marshy parts of Egypt, or in the stagnant water that remains behind after the inundation of the Nile. From the root springs up an oblique stalk, as thick as an arm and triangular; it rises ten yards high, and ends at the top in a kind of tuft or bunch of flowers, which are only applied for wreaths in honour of the gods. The Egyptians use the root as we do wood, not only as fuel but also as material for vessels. From the rush itself they make boats; and the bark is used for sails, tiles, clothes, and ropes."—Abarbanel raises the question, why Jochebed exposed her son in the river, thus delivering him up to death, which was the only aim of the tyrant's cruel edict; so that nothing worse could have happened to the child than her own device. Of the four reasons which he offers in reply, one appears especially conclusive: that by

hiding her son longer she would have brought upon herself and her whole family also a certain death, as having contravened the royal decree, without, by all this, saving the child. Ebn Ezra, who, like all old interpreters, sees naturally the special finger of God in the miraculous incidents of Moses' childhood and youth, gives, in his own lucid and philosophical style, expression to this conviction in the following manner: "Deep are the dispensations of God; and who can penetrate into His mysteries! By Him all actions are weighed and ordained in infinite wisdom. It was perhaps His inscrutable intention, that Moses should be educated at the royal court, that his mind might receive the highest possible culture, and his spirit might remain uncurbed by the oppressive and enervating influence of slavery. Thus we read, that he killed the Egyptian, because his noble heart could not see violence and injustice; and from the same generous motives, he assisted the daughters of Reuel against the insolence of the shepherds. And further, if he had always lived among his brethren, and if they had known him from his childhood, they would not have felt for him that respect and reverence which was so essential for the accomplishment of his great mission." In a similar sense writes Schiller (*Die Sendung Moses*, x. p. 414, 415): "An Egyptian by birth would have lacked the requisite patriotic impulse, the national interest for the Hebrews, to attempt their deliverance. A mere Hebrew, on the other hand, would, under his oppression and thralldom, scarcely have had the energy and courage indispensable for such an arduous undertaking. What device did, therefore, Providence choose? It selected an Israelite, but withdrew him in his early infancy from the miseries of his people, and enabled him to store his mind with all the treasures of Egyptian wisdom; and thus the

the bank of the Nile. 4. And his sister stood afar off ¹ to see what would be done to him.

5. And the daughter of Pharaoh went down ² to bathe

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—To wit.

² To wash herself.

Hebrew, brought up as an Egyptian, became the instrument by which that nation was redeemed from its slavery." (See, however, our note to ver. 10.)—The history of the birth, preservation, and education of Moses has, on account of its unusual character, been described as a fable and the offspring of imagination. It is true, that similar accounts are given with regard to the infancy of other celebrated individuals of antiquity, as of Semiramis, Cyrus, Romulus, Augustus, and others. But these accounts, evidently replete with adventurous and incredible incidents, differ widely from the truthful narration of our text, which, indeed, contains nothing that even the most sceptical mind can deem impossible, especially if the customs of ancient Egypt, and the circumstances of that particular epoch of her history, are taken into due consideration.

5. *And the daughter of Pharaoh went down to bathe at the river.* The Egyptians, especially the women, show their veneration for the Nile, which is held sacred on account of its incalculable importance for the prosperity of the country, by immersing in it at the time when it begins to rise. Perhaps the daughter of Pharaoh went to the Nile in order to perform this religious ceremony. The time would agree with this supposition, for the Nile begins to swell in Lower Egypt about the middle of June, and as, according to tradition, Moses was born on the seventh day of Adar, he was then about three months old. Now, in general, the women were not so restricted in Egypt as in other parts of the Orient. Clarke proposes to take רחץ here in the signification of *washing clothes or linen*, and quotes, as a parallel, the Homeric narrative about Nausicaa, daughter of king Alcinoüs, hinting even at the possibility, "that Homer made the Hebrew story the basis of the 6th book of the *Odyssey*." But the mania of seeking the

Bible in Homer, Plato, Virgil, Plutarch, and almost all heathen writers, who happen to utter any analogous idea, or to relate any like occurrence, or to use any similar metaphor, is now fairly exploded, and is, in fact, so thoroughly uncritical, that we should consider it a waste of time to attempt any kind of refutation; besides, to wash *garments* is never רחץ, but כבש (see *Ges. Thes.* p. 1284).—Josephus, who, like Philo, adorns the circumstances connected with the birth of the legislator with legendary and poetical embellishments, calls the name of Pharaoh's daughter Thermuthis, which, according to *Cahen*, might be identical with *Tomrots*, a name recently deciphered on an Egyptian monument. *Eusebius* calls her name Merrhis. The narration of the Koran about Moses (28th Sura), is a mixture of the statements of Josephus and the Midrash explanations, in the usual incoherent and unhistorical manner of that volume. As a curiosity, we add, that Artapanus represents Moses, as a pupil of Orpheus, and asserts, that the priests gave him the surname Hermes, on account of his hermeneutical skill in the interpretation of the holy books. So busy has the imagination been to shed a fabulous halo round the head of the law-giver, who does not require fictitious splendour, to be glorious and immortal. From the circumstance that the daughter of Pharaoh came to bathe in that part of the Nile where the child was exposed, it would appear that Amram lived near, or in the royal residence, or that the latter was, at least temporarily, in Goshen. We have already observed (on i. 7), that, on the one hand, the land of Goshen was not exclusively inhabited by Israelites, and that, on the other hand, these might partly have been scattered over different parts of Egypt; and that they assembled in Goshen only at the time, and for the purpose of the Exodus.

at the river, and her maidens walked by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid servant ¹ and she took it. 6. And when she opened it, she saw the child; and, behold, ² it was a weeping boy. And she had compassion on him and said, *This is one of the Hebrews' children.* 7. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—To fetch it.

² The babe wept.

6. *She saw the child.* Rashbam explains these words thus: "and she opened the ark, and examined the child, and behold! it was a boy, a boy of the Hebrew race, which she inferred from his being circumcised." But it is well known, that, besides other nations, the Egyptians also circumcised their children (Jerem. ix. 25; Herod. ii. 36; τὰ αἰδοῖα ὧλλοι μὲν ἐῷσι ὡς ἐγένοντο πλὴν ὅσοι ἀπὸ τούτων ἔμαθον. Αἰγύπτῳ δὲ περιτάρνονται. See Bohlen, Genesis, p. 190—196). Ramban observes, more plausibly, that the fact of seeing the child exposed in the Nile naturally recalled to her mind the royal edict against the new-born Hebrews.

7. *Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women?* that is, a nurse who neither feels antipathy against the Hebrew child, nor will treat it carelessly, for both were to be apprehended from an Egyptian nurse, see ver. 8.

8. It has often been alleged, not without some specious probability, that the holy mission for which Moses was destined, did not allow him to be nursed by an Egyptian woman; but from this point of view his education at the idolatrous court of the Egyptian king would be equally unaccountable. "The princess objected to an Egyptian nurse, from fear that he might be neglected, or even delivered up by her to the officers of the king." Perhaps an Egyptian nurse might even have refused to take care of a child of the persecuted and detested race of the Hebrews.

10. *And the child grew,* that is, was weaned, which was done among the

Israelites, as among the Egyptians and other Eastern nations, when the child was three years old, see 2 Maccab. ii. 28. Compare 2 Chron. xxx. 16; Koran ii. 233, xxxi. 13. According to rabbinical authorities, however, the child was weaned when it had completed its second year (see *Kimchi*, ad Gen. xxi. 8); and Morier ("A second Journey through Persia," etc. p. 107) relates, that the Persians suckle the boys two years and two months, but the girls only two years. The day of weaning the child is usually celebrated in the East with repasts and convivial festivities (compare Gen. xxi. 8), and was, in later periods of the Hebrew history, attended with the offering of a sacrifice on the part of the mother (see 1 Sam. i. 24), and is still, in Persia, connected with certain religious ceremonies. See also *Mungo Park*, Travels, p. 237.—*And he became her son*, Targum Jonathan renders "he was tared to her like a child." But Ebn Ezra already observes, that he was called her son, because she brought him up; Compare 2 Sam. xxi. 8. "Thermuthis, the king's daughter, perceiving him to be so remarkable a child, adopted him for her own, having no child of her own. And when, one time, she had brought and presented Moses to her father, she said that she intended to make him her father's successor, if it should please God she should have no legitimate child of her own" (*Josephus*, Antiq. II. ix. 7).—The incidental remarks of *Josephus* (loc. cit., compare *Philo*, Vita Mos. i. § 3), that "Moses was educated with great care," and of St. Stephen (Acts vii. 22), "that he was educated in all the

Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? 8. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. 9. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child and nursed it. 10. And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses, and

wisdom of the Egyptians," (ἐκπαίδευσθαι πάσῃ σοφίᾳ Αἰγυπτίων), have continually led many critics to deduce almost the whole system of the Mosaic legislation from Egyptian sources, to consider it merely as a local adaptation of Egyptian statutes, in which Moses, by his admission into the caste of priests, and his initiation in their mysteries, was deeply versed, and thus to deprive Mosaism of every originality in many of its most essential points (see even *Heeren*, *Ideas*, ii. p. 647). It is obvious, that such insinuations, if true, would strike a fatal blow against the value and the origin of the whole religious code of the Pentateuch. It is, therefore, of the highest importance to examine whether, and how far, the legislation of Moses is based on, or derived from, Egyptian institutions and notions. The reader will find our remarks on this point in a supplementary note at the end of this chapter.

And she called his name *Moses* (מֹשֶׁה), and she said, Because I drew him out (מִשְׁתִּיהוּ) of the water. The etymology and meaning of the name *Moses* (who is called by the Septuagint and Josephus Μωϋσῆς, the Vulgate, Moyses, the Arabians, Musa), is naturally much disputed; for the explanation given in the text "because I drew him out of the water" would require, not the active form *Mosheh*, but the passive participle *Mashui*. The former would rather imply the notion of a general leading the people of Israel from Egypt, an *archageta* (see *Jad Joseph* fol. 69, a; *Hüllmann*, p. 68; *Bohlen*, *Genes. Introd.* p. lxxxii). Besides, it is questionable that the Egyptian princess should have given to her adopted

son a *Hebrew* name, whilst Joseph received from Pharaoh the undoubtedly Egyptian appellation, *Zophnath paneah* (revealer of mysteries) Gen. xli. 45. Antiquarians and historians have, therefore, justly endeavoured to trace the name of Moses to an Egyptian origin; and Josephus already observes (*Antiq.* II. ix. 6): "He received his name from the particular circumstances of his infancy, when he had been exposed in the Nile; for the Egyptians call the water *mo*, and one who is rescued from the waves, *uses*" (τὸ γὰρ ὕδωρ μὲν οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι καλοῦσιν, ὁ σῆς δὲ τοὺς ἐξ ὕδατος σωθέντας). The Septuagint, which renders Μωϋσῆς, has, therefore, accurately preserved the etymology. Now this name, originally Egyptian, has, then, been adapted to the genius of the Hebrew idiom, and referred to the Hebrew root *mashah* to draw (*Rashi*, *Rashbam*), with which it has the greatest resemblance in sound, although it is of rare use (occurring only thrice in the Old Test.), although the form is grammatically not correct, and the principal and essential notion (water) is not expressed in the word. Although Gesenius approves of this explanation, he proposes (*Thesaurus*, p. 823) another conjecture, in our opinion of a much more artificial and complicated nature, namely, that according to the analogy of most of the Egyptian proper nouns, which are compounded with names of their deities, Moses has a similar meaning as *Amenmôś*, the son of Ammon; or *Harmôś*, the son of Hor, or *Rhamôś*, the son of the sun (môs signifying *son*), but that the first part of the name was omitted in the language of daily intercourse. Other

she said, Because I drew him out of the water. 11. And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren, and looked on their

writers, also desirous to secure for the lawgiver an original Egyptian name, assert, that he was called Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) by the Hebrews only, but that the Egyptians knew him under the name of Osarsiph (Ὀσάρσιφ), the priest of Osiris; or Tisithen (Τισιθέιν), or Hermes (Ἑρμῆς), or Menes (Ebn Ezra), against which opinion Abarbanel strongly objects, admitting, however, that Menes, or a similar Egyptian epithet signifying *the wise* or *great*, might have been given to Moses as an *appellative* surname after the great miracles which he performed before Pharaoh, and his wise measures had become generally known in Egypt. Such a wide field of conjecture was opened concerning the real Hebrew name of the lawgiver, that the Talmud (Sotah 12, Meg. 3) enumerates no less than nine different names (Heber, Jekuthiel, Jered, Sanoah, Abigdor, Abischo, Shemajah, Tobiah, Nathaniel), believed to have been given to him by the different members of his family, and the people of Israel. He received, no doubt, a Hebrew name at his circumcision, or certainly during the three months of his concealment in the house of his parents (see *Jad Joseph*, 69; *Parton*, Illustr. i. p. 470). Abarbanel thus understands our words: "the mother Jochebed, when bringing her child to the daughter of Pharaoh, called his name Moses, for, said she, you have drawn him out of the water." Although this interpretation is grammatically not inadmissible, the change of the subject in the same sentence, although not without parallels, would here be singularly forced; and it would, further, be surprising, if Jochebed, who was not known to the princess as the mother of the child, but only as his paid nurse, had given the name instead of the princess herself, to whom that privilege belonged according to the ancient customs of adoption.

11. *And it came to pass in those days.*
In which year of Moses' life the conse-

quential facts related in the following verses happened, is left indefinite in the context. A considerable number of years must have elapsed (wherefore the Septuagint renders "It was after *many* days"; so also Clericus and Rosenmüller); but to decide the precise period in the life of Moses must remain mere conjecture. An old tradition asserts that every forty years there was an important crisis in the fates of Moses; he led the Israelites from Egypt in his 80th year; he died in his 120th year; therefore, it is added, he was probably forty years old when his flight to Midian took place. The same number of years is mentioned in Acts vii. 23 (see *Wettstein* on our passage; and *Eichhorn*, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 186 note). Josephus, in accordance with the uncritical taste of his time, fills up this long interval till the flight of Moses with various events and deeds, to which we find no allusion in our text, but which are partly misrepresentations of Egyptian or Greek sources, and partly inventions of a fertile imagination. He relates, in his Antiquities (II. x), "The Ethiopians had invaded and devastated the territory of the Egyptians. The latter marched with a numerous army against them, but were completely defeated. They consulted the oracle, which advised them to confide the leadership of the war to Moses, the Hebrew. After deliberate and extensive preparations, he entered upon the expedition; his march led him through the vast desert, which was infested with all kinds of serpents and vermin; he purified it by storks and ibises which he had taken with him for that purpose. On his arrival in the hostile dominions, he took, after a persevering and skilful siege, the town Saba, later called Meroe; and the royal princess, Tharbis, was so captivated by his talent and manly energy, that she offered him spontaneously her hand; he accepted it, and led her in triumph back to Egypt as

burdens, and he ¹saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren. 12. And he ²turned this way and

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Spied.

² Looked.

his legitimate wife." That this narrative bears the character of legendary invention, and that it cannot claim historical authenticity, needs scarcely to be remarked. The military skill which Moses had, at a later period, as the leader of the Hebrews, occasion to exhibit, seemed to presuppose some previous experience and practice in the operations of war, whereas the genius of Moses, inspired by the dictates of his great mission, did not necessarily require such preparatory exercise; and the statement that he married the Ethiopian princess Tharbis, has, no doubt, its source in the statement contained in Numbers xii. 1. that Moses took an Ethiopian wife; but he did this evidently during the journeys through the Arabian desert, and not before the Exodus from Egypt; for Cushites lived in Arabia also (see *Forster*, in *Epist. ad J. D. Michaelis*, pp. 5 and 19, *et seq.*, who vainly endeavours to vindicate the historical character of the Ethiopian expedition of Moses, and offers the hazardous supposition that the latter was a contemporary of Sesostris, whom he accompanied on all his distant expeditions, and that he became thus acquainted with the locality of Paradise). The "Book of the Chronicles of Moses" differs from the relation of Josephus in some particulars, the most remarkable of which is, that Moses was proclaimed king of the Ethiopians in his thirtieth year, which dignity he maintained during forty years; and after this period he fled to Midian, where he was imprisoned seven years by Jethro, and then united in marriage with his daughter Zipporah. Abarbanel observes, that all these allegations might be facts, but that they have been omitted in the text, because they have no connection with the sacred mission of Moses, which forms the exclusive contents of the four latter books of the Pentateuch (see *Introduction*, § 2. ii). However, for the estimation of these and similar accounts, we

submit to our readers the following unequivocal and determined remark of Ebn Ezra (on ver. 22): "And I declare to you, as a rule, all books which are not written by prophets, or according to authentic tradition, deserve no credit whatever, yea, they contain even sentiments militating against reason and common sense; and such works are the Book of Zerubbabel, and the Book of Eldad, the Danite, and the Book of Chronicles of Moses, and similar writings."

When Moses was grown, that is, when he had become a man full of vigour and intelligence; the similar phrase, in the preceding verse, signifies only his growing to the usual age of weaning the child. *He went out to his brethren*; for the mystery of his birth had, perhaps by his parents, been disclosed to him, and, although educated in all the luxuries of an Eastern court, he had preserved a feeling heart for the sufferings of his brethren; he went from the palace to enquire into their condition, and he sympathised with their afflictions with all the ardour and energy of a noble and generous mind.—*And looked on their burdens*. He gave his attention, applied his mind to their oppressive labours, which grieved his heart (*Rashi*).—*And he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren*. Royal taskmasters were appointed to control and urge on the Hebrew labourers, as the delegated officers of a superior despotic power. They appear to have often abused their authority, and treated the Hebrews with degrading and revolting cruelty (see our notes to v. 6, 10, 14, 15). The Egyptian smote the Hebrew, but did not kill him, as the surviving Israelite alone could have divulged the resolute action of Moses, related in the following verse.

12. The impetuous anger, and the summary revenge practised by Moses, in which some writers have seen the violent action of a true descendant of his pas-

that way, and when he saw that *there was* no man, he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. 13. And when he went out the second day, behold, two Hebrews contended together, and he said to him that did wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow-man? 14. And he

sionate ancestor Levi (Gen. xlix. 5—7), will not surprise those who consider that the position of the Egyptians to the Hebrews, was that of violence, not of right; justice was not to be expected against the arbitrariness of the Egyptian officers, whose rigour was countenanced and even sanctioned and enjoined by their superiors. In such a state of public affairs stratagem is to be met with stratagem, and force with force, according to the *right of the stronger*; and the deed of Moses—who, in a generous impulse of the moment, risked his high station, and even his existence, for the cause of justice and innocence—belongs to those which history records as noble and magnanimous. “Despair and vengeance are the dreadful resources of the oppressed; and few men, suffering under a common yoke of slavery, would hesitate to punish on a tyrant a wrong done to their fellow, even as if it were done to themselves” (Wilson). And although there were certain kinds of Hebrew magistrates in Egypt, as the *elders* (iii. 16, and our note on the passage) and the *Shoterim*, the general registrars (see our note on v. 16), they had not sufficient authority to enforce their decrees; the weaker part had no hope to obtain justice by legal means; and all facts agree to justify the opinion that the Israelites were in a lawless position. And according to Diod. Sic. (i. § 17) there was an Egyptian law, enforcing that he who saw a man killed, or violently assaulted on the highway, and did not endeavour to rescue him if he could, was punished with death (see a more figurative explanation of our verse in Abarbanel’s note on this passage).—*And hid him in the sand.* In Egypt and Arabia, men not unfrequently find their death in the sand driven and accumulated by the wind (Lengerke). If the

corpse of the Egyptian had been found in the field, his avengers of blood, or relations, would have searched after the murderer, and delivered him up into the hands of justice (Abarbanel). The Koran, which, in almost all particulars, follows Jewish traditions, although often freely and inaccurately, adds, after the relation of this deed of Moses: “But soon repenting of it, he exclaimed, ‘This is a work of Satan, who is an open seducer and fiend,’ and he prayed, ‘O my Lord, I have sinned; pardon me, I beseech Thee.’ And God forgave him, for he is compassionate and all-merciful.” From all this we must reject the remark of Cahen, “This deed, although dictated by a legitimate indignation, shows that Moses was still in the effervescence of youth, and under the influence of an African climate;” we find, in the conduct of Moses, rather a corroboration of the opinion of Göthe, “a strong sense of justice and injustice is the principal feature in the character of Moses.” And should, further, the whole transaction not justify us in supposing that an unformed idea of rescuing his brethren from the Egyptian yoke filled and occupied, even then, the mind of Moses?

13. *The second, the following, day* (Acts vii. 26, τῇ ἑξήκοντῃ ἡμέρᾳ).—*Two men*, according to a tradition, Dathan and Abiram; against which assumption, however, Abarbanel objects, that we find, later, God commanding Moses to return from Midian to Egypt, “because all, who sought his life, were dead” (iv. 19), whereas Dathan and Abiram outlived that period considerably. “The first action of Moses was to punish the oppression of his brethren (ver. 12), the second is to restore harmony among them (ver. 13)” (Cahen).

15. Moses was compelled to flee; for manslaughter was, in Egypt, inexorably

said, Who made thee a superior and judge over us? Dost thou intend to kill me as thou hast killed the Egyptian? And Moses feared and said, Surely the thing is known. 15. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by the well.

punished with death (Diod. Sic. i. 6). And although the avenging of blood might have been lawful in Egypt, Moses could not class his action under that category; because the Egyptian had only beaten, not killed, the Israelite (see ver. 11); and if even the latter had been the case, Moses would have been exposed to the same danger, because he had exercised that right in favour of the detested Hebrew race, whose extermination was the cherished aim of the Egyptian despot, in whatever way it might be attained.—*And he dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.* “The text relates, first, the general event of his sojourning in Midian, and proceeds then to describe the details of that event” (*Mendelssohn*). Abarbanel explains less appropriately: “And when he had dwelt in the land of Midian many years, he happened once to sit by a well.” *The land of Midian*, so called from one of the sons of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. xxv. 2, 4), extended to the south and east of Canaan; from the eastern coast of the Elanitic gulf of the Red Sea to the territory of the Moabites in the north, and the region of Mount Sinai in the south. A town, Madianu, or Modiana, is mentioned on the coast of the Elanitic gulf, which was already destroyed in the time of Edrisi and Abulfeda, who, nevertheless, notice the very well where the daughter of Schoaib, as the Moslems call Jethro, went to water the flocks, and saw, for the first time, her future husband. Josephus, who continues systematically his fanciful narration, names a city, Madiene (*Μαδινη*), on the Red Sea, as the locality of the following events. It is, however, questionable, whether the Midianites of our text really lived in these regions; the more so, as later we find

Midianites mentioned between Edom and Paran (1 Kings xi. 18). It is, perhaps, more probable, to suppose with Rosenmüller (*Antiq.* iii. 95), besides those Midianites who formed the principal stock of that tribe, and who were engaged in commercial pursuits (see Gen. xxxvii. 25—28), another more nomadic and pastoral ramification of the same people in the Arabic desert between mount Sinai, Edom and Canaan. For it is not unusual with originally nomadic tribes, that some portions separate themselves from the chief stock of the nation, and settle in different districts. This supposition is more in harmony with several passages of the Pentateuch (as Exod. iii. 1, iv. 27, xviii. 1, etc.).—Wells are of such vital importance for the nomadic tribes of the East, in the arid tracts which they inhabit, that they are not seldom the cause of serious contention and even warfare (Gen. xxvi. 15, 20; *Paxton*, *Illustr.* i. pp. 41—50); and in the Bible they are frequently the scene of the narrative. The water was fetched at fixed times of the day (see *Odyssey* vii. 20; *Rosenmüller*, *Orient.* i. p. 102), and Niebuhr found in those regions still the same obliging politeness (*Travels*, ii. p. 410). Wells and fountains were places of amusement and of social meetings, and frequently engagements were here concluded; thus the matrimonial alliances of Isaac, Jacob and Moses, were formed at wells (Gen. xxiv. xxix).—*And he sat down by the well.* The definite article, which appears strange, is accounted for by Ewald (*Gram.* § 496), “because there is, in the neighbourhood of each town, one well only for watering the cattle.” “Perhaps that well bore the name of ‘the well of Midian’” (*Glaire*).

16. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew *water*, and filled the gutters to water their father's flock. 17. And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses arose and helped them, and watered their flock. 18. And when they came to Reuel, their father, he said, *How is it that you are come so soon*

16. *Now the priest (Cohen) of Midian.* Onkelos: The *chief* of the Midianites, so Rashi; Jonathan: *tyrant*. But the sons of David are also called *Cohanim* (2 Sam. viii. 18), which, it is asserted, cannot mean *priests*, as these were only the descendants of Aaron (Numb. iii. 10), but civil officers; in which opinion they are the more strengthened by the parallel passage in 1 Chron. xviii. 17, where the sons of David are called "the first about the person of the king." But as David himself certainly offered sacrifices, and blessed the people (2 Sam. vi. 17, 18; xxiv. 25), which are, undoubtedly, sacerdotal functions, he could as well confer upon his sons some of these ministrations. We, therefore, rather accede to Ebn Ezra's opinion, that every minister, even one of an idolatrous religion, is called *priest* (Cohen). In Exod. xviii. 12, pontifical functions are ascribed to Jethro. *Cohen* means, in a more extended sense, public servant or officer, and might signify either a civil or clerical dignitary, or both at the same time; for it is well known that the functions of sovereign and priest were, in ancient polities, united in the same person. The Septuagint adds, after "seven daughters," the words, "feeding the flock of his father Jethro" (see note to ver. 18).

17. *And drove them away.* The reason of the strife is thus described by Josephus (Antiq. II. xi. 2): "There being a scarcity of water in those regions, the shepherds exerted themselves to be the first in occupying the wells, lest others use up the water and their own cattle be unprovided for."—*And helped them.* This is the second time that we see Moses assist the feeble and injured (*Cohen*).

18. The chief difficulty of this verse

lies in the name *Reuel*, which is here attributed to the father-in-law of Moses, whilst in iii. 1, iv. 18, he is called *Jethro*, and in Numb. x. 29, *Hobab the son of Reuel*, which latter designation agrees with Judges iv. 11, so that Reuel would be the grandfather and not the father of the seven daughters mentioned in our text. Although *father* is sometimes used in a general sense for ancestor, and *son* and *daughter* in that of grandchild, yet the distinct repetition of *their father, his daughters*, etc., excludes, in our passage, that conception, which is, however, adopted by Targum Jonathan, Ebn Ezra, Rashbam, Mendelssohn, and Rosenmüller. Abarbanel leaves the question undecided. Nor is this view sufficiently corroborated by the remark of Michaelis, that Reuel, the grandfather, was still alive, and was, therefore, the head of the family, when Moses first arrived in Midian, but that, after his death, that dignity passed over to Jethro, his son, who is, therefore, from the next chapter, exclusively mentioned (for between our verse, and the beginning of the third chapter, lies a long interval of time, ver. 23). But Jethro would then, according to the context (ver. 21), be the brother, and not the father of Zipporah. To explain this difficulty, some critics have advanced, that *Coten*, which the Hebrew text here uses, has a wider signification than father-in-law, including all the relatives on the side of the wife. But this meaning of the word is, with certainty, not found in any passage of the Bible. Vater suggests, that Reuel is a mere appellation, "friend of God," or an official title; and Clericus asserts the same of Jethro: but these are nothing more than convenient suppositions, although those of Clericus and Vater are strengthened by

to-day? 19. And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew *water* enough for us, and watered the flock. 20. And he said unto his daughters, ¹Where then *is* he? why *is* it *that* you have left the man? call him that he may eat bread.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And where.

Josephus (*Antiq.* II. xii. 1). Eichhorn removes the difficulty very unceremoniously, by his dissecting and anatomising theory, asserting, that the first two chapters of Exodus have a different author from the following part of the book, and that the one calls Moses' father-in-law Reuel, the other Jethro; by which explanation, however, hazarded in itself, the third name, Hobab, is not accounted for, unless, indeed, he suppose a third author, and a third fragment, which is actually done in the English commentary of Wilson (1853), with the following words: "Three different writers gave varying accounts, and the compiler of the Pentateuch [according to that author, Ezra, B. C. 500] implicitly followed his original documents," because "not any single writer would throw such uncertainty about his subject." Nor would even the most heedless compiler, much less the wise Ezra, have given such confused statements; for is a *compiler* less bound to regard the unity and harmony of his work than the author of original documents? Such theories are convenient, but not scientific. Cahen throws out the remark: "Moses had, perhaps, several fathers-in-law," without in any way substantiating this opinion. But we need only recur to the observation of the Talmud, that Moses' father-in-law had seven different names, among which are mentioned Reuel, Hobab and Jethro. (These three words have a similar signification,—the beloved of God.) Nor is it unusual in the East for the same person to have more than one name; so, for instance, is Jacob identical with Israel, and Israel with Jeshurun; Esau bore also the name of Edom; David called the son of Bathsheba Solomon, whilst the prophet Nathan

called him Jedidiah. For the names were not unfrequently, at eventful circumstances in the lives of individuals, altered in accordance with the character of those facts. So were the names of Abram and Sarai changed into Abraham and Sarah when a new epoch in their existence was announced to them by the deity; Hoshea was called Jehoshua (*Num.* xiii. 16) when he was sent to explore the land of Canaan; Gideon was called Jerubbaal after he had, by the destruction of the altar of Baal, declared open war to idolatry and idolators (*Judges* vi. 32, vii. 1). Sometimes the son received also the name of the father, as Tobias i. 9.

19. An Egyptian. Moses was considered as an Egyptian either on account of his language (Abarbanel), or his dress, or both; but certainly not on account of his physiognomy (as Cahen observes), which, being Asiatic, differed materially from that of the native and original Egyptian. (About the descent, the personal character, and the race to which the Egyptians belonged, see *Heeren*, *Ideas*, ii. p. 544—553).—*And also drew water for us.* The daughters of Reuel had drawn water and filled the gutters in order to water their sheep (*ver.* 16). The shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses filled the gutters anew, so as to be sufficient for the whole flock (*ver.* 17, 19; Abarbanel, Mendelssohn). "Either they magnified the services of Moses, or the water which they had drawn did not suffice" (*Ebn Ezra*).

20. That he may eat bread, that is, refresh himself. About the application of the word *bread* in the Hebrew for *meals* in general, see note on xvi. 3.

21. And Moses consented. The Sep-

21. And Moses consented to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah, his daughter. 22. And she bare *him* a son, and he called his name Gershom: for he said, 'I am a stranger in a strange land.

23. And it came to pass in that long time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed

¹ *Engl. Vers.* — I have been.

tuagint does not express the verb *consented*. *Vulg.*; "Moses swore that he would dwell with him;" according to a rabbinical tradition, that Moses promised with an oath, that he would not leave Midian without the consent of Jethro. Abarbanel infers from this verb, that Moses was, only after repeated and pressing solicitations of Reuel, and after having convinced himself of his superior wisdom, induced to stay in the house of an idolatrous priest, and to enter with him into bonds of relationship. Glaire takes it here in the signification of *hazarding*, *venturing*, and explains, that Moses, by marrying the daughter of Reuel, exposed himself to the vengeance of the shepherds, and risked, for ever to be retained among a foreign people, and never to see again his dearly-beloved family. But, under the circumstances, no alternative was left to him, nor did his marriage in any way check his resolute plans for his returning to Egypt, and the deliverance of his nation.—*With the man*, is evidently Reuel, for nobody else has been mentioned in the preceding verse; and this is a further corroboration of the opinion, that Jethro and Reuel are identical; for Jethro is incontestably the father of Zipporah, who alone could give *his daughter* to Moses (see on ver. 18). We need not, therefore, attend to the very forced supposition of Ebn Ezra, that Jethro, the father, is here not mentioned, because he happened to be absent, engaged with the performance of his clerical functions; nor can we see anything of the difficulty which Rosenmüller finds in this passage. *Zipporah*, a Semitic word, signifying *bird*; and so in Arabic, which was spoken in Midian.

(see ver. 16).—It appears that the matrimonial alliance between Moses and Zipporah was concluded only a very considerable time after the arrival of the former in Midian, as, at his return to Egypt (about forty years later), his children were still of a very tender age.

22. Gershom. The etymology of this name is here stated, as if it were compounded of *ger* (a stranger), and *sham* (there), wherefore the Septuagint writes Γερσάμ, whilst others believe it to be identical with *Gershon*, and derive it from *Garash*, to expel. The derivation given in the text shows, unmistakably, that although Moses was, in Midian, safe against the vindictiveness and persecution of Pharaoh, and his other adversaries, and although he lived among a kindred nation, descended from Abraham, he entertained still a longing desire for that country where his brethren suffered, and that he felt deeply all the bitter pangs of an exile, although Egypt was not the land of promise, and the Israelites were then no free nation. The second son of Moses, Eliezer, was also born to him during his sojourn in Midian, which he left accompanied by his wife and *children* (iv. 20). In xviii. 3, 4, both are mentioned, and some manuscripts of the Septuagint, the Vulgate, the Arabic, Syriac and Coptic versions, introduce here also that younger son.

23. *And it came to pass in that long time*, namely, in that extended period between the flight of Moses, and his return to Egypt, which embraces a space of time of about forty years (see on ver. 11, according to Ramban and Abarbanel, sixty years).—*The king of Egypt died, and the children of Israel sighed*

because of the bondage, and they cried, and their supplications came up to God because of the bondage.

24. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

25. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God² regarded *them*.

² *Engl. Vers.*—Had respect unto.

because of the bondage. The Hebrews had, with anxious expectation, hoped for the death of the tyrant as the event which would relax their fetters, and alleviate their miseries; but his successor enacted new and still more rigorous measures of cruelty, for the deliverance from which they implored the intervention of the God of their ancestors, to whom "they now at last returned after many years of idolatrous aberration" (*Ebn Ezra*), and their prayers were favourably accepted by the merciful Ruler of mankind. Osburn is of opinion, that the king who died, was Siphtha, the husband of Thouoris, (whom he believes to have saved and adopted Moses), and therefore, son-in-law of Sesostris the Great, who was the "new king" mentioned in i. 8, the originator of the cruel measures against the Hebrews (*Mon. Hist.* ii. p. 572; compare pp. 429—549). But the historical character of Sesostris entirely disagrees with the picture which the first chapter of our book draws of his conduct. Osburn himself says: "he was the greatest, the wisest, and the best king that ever sat upon the throne of Egypt" (p. 545). But the policy of the

"new king" against the Israelites is both cruel and unwise in the extreme; the sanguinary edict to kill all male children, must necessarily produce a result perfectly the reverse of that which he desired, and which his interests demanded: it was not calculated to effect an amalgamation of the Israelites with the Egyptians, but their extirpation.

24. Compare Gen. xii. 7; xiii. 15; xv. 18; xvii. 8; xxiv. 7; xxvi. 3, 4.

25. *And God regarded them.* These words, which the English Version renders: "and God had respect unto them," and which are emphatically brief, have called forth very different explanations. However, Rashi already has given the most acceptable interpretation: "he directed his mind upon them, and did not avert his eyes."—The expressions *and God heard, remembered, looked, regarded*, are not anthropomorphic, but the only possible phraseology which the human language can use with reference to the Eternal Being. (Compare the excellent remarks in *Cusari* ii. 4, and our note to xix. 20, 21). The Rabbinical dictum is: "The law employs the ordinary human language."

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

CHAP. II. VER. 10.

EGYPTIAN CIVILISATION AND THE LAWS OF MOSES.

We shall, in this place, only attempt the *negative* proof, that "Egyptian wisdom" could not possibly have furnished the materials for the Mosaic laws; the *positive* proof, that Mosaism is, in its sublimest and world-regenerating principles, a perfectly original system, will be established in our discussion on the individual laws.

It is true, that the Pentateuch is accurately informed on the customs and the internal organisation of Egypt. A careful comparison with the classical writers, and, still more, the examination of the monumental records of Egypt, recently pursued

with such energy and promising success, proves the perfect correctness of the biblical statements concerning Egypt and her institutions. The people (except the priests), were, during a long period of Egyptian history, dependent on the king with regard to landed property (Gen. xlvii. 21—24; see our note to i. 8; compare Herod. ii. 168); the king is surrounded by a completely organised court (Gen. xii. 15), a grand vizier, who holds his seal (Gen. xli. 42), eunuchs and guards, by numerous priests, soothsayers, and interpreters of dreams (Gen. xli. 8; Exod. vii. 11); the Egyptians are correctly represented as divided into castes, who do not share their meals at the same table (Gen. xliii. 32); shepherds are an abomination to them (Gen. xlv. 43; Exod. viii. 23); they bear burdens on their heads (Gen. xl. 16); embalm their dead (Gen. l. 2); the physical sciences were in the exclusive possession of one class ("the Chartumim" חֲרֻטִּים, ἱερογραμματεῖς, Exod. vii. 8, 14); Egypt had an army always prepared for military operations (Exod. xiv. 6); Egyptian priests had to eat the animal on which the sins of the people were symbolically laden, and thus to take their transgressions upon themselves (Levit. x. 17, etc.) But do these coincidences compel us to suppose that the author of the Pentateuch was an Egyptian priest? or are they unaccountable except by the conjecture that Moses drew his information from the secret societies of learning? Are not all these facts such as must have spontaneously enforced themselves on every inhabitant or visitor of Egypt?

It is further to be allowed, that the Pentateuch exhibits a certain degree of civilisation in Egypt, as is partly manifest from some of the circumstances just referred to; but we must calmly estimate the extent of this culture:—

1st. The *political* organisation of the country; the system of hereditary castes, which impeded the free individual development, and brought stagnation into the national life; the preponderance of the priests, and the impotence of the people; the tyrannical position of the king, and the yoke and contempt of the inferior most useful classes; the dependence of the government on clerical arbitrariness; this whole organization has found but few eulogists; and it is, in almost all points, the direct antagonism of the Mosaic law, which recognises political *equality* of all citizens as the supreme leading principle (see note on xix. 22).

2nd. Egyptian *Art*, or, rather, *Architecture* (the only art in which they excelled), has called forth the loud admiration of many students and travellers; and a modern author goes even so far as to assert that "for sublime grandeur of design, and symmetrical beauty of arrangement, none of the works of Rome, of Greece, and Mesopotamia, will bear comparison with the ruins of Thebes" (*Osburn, Monumental History of Egypt*, ii. p. 176; see also *Denon, Voyage*, ii. p. 16). But it is superfluous to point out the exaggeration of such propositions; it is almost the unanimous opinion of all authorities of art, that the character of the great architectural monuments of Egypt is not beauty, but colossal and gigantic grandeur; that they were majestic piles of matter, little spiritualised by the charms of gracefulness, only calculated to inspire the mind with awe and horror, and to defy the destructive influence of time; they were seldom erected for private purposes; but they were dwellings for the gods or abodes for the dead. *Heeren* (*Ideas*, ii. pp. 650—660) has proved, from the internal character of Egyptian art, "that the representation of the beautiful was not, and could not be its end;" it did not exist for its own sake; it stood in the service of religion and politics; and *Osburn* himself confesses, in a later part of his volume (p. 480), "Art in Egypt was altogether impatient of the trammels, not of truth merely, but of probability . . . and this it is which goes far to deprive art in Egypt of all that can create either pleasure or interest." And thus we have the severest criticism against Egyptian art from the mouth of one of its most enthusiastic admirers. The temple of Isis, in Tentyris, (Denderah); the huge temple of Jupiter in Thebes; the palace and colossus of Memnon; the mausoleum of Osimandias, and all the old temples, palaces,

colossi, obelisks, tombs and pyramids, which cover Egypt from Tentyris down to the islands of Elephantine and Philae; and further, the stupendous labyrinth, with its 1500 apartments beneath the earth, and as many above it, and the astounding water-works, channels, flood-gates and mounds: all this does not prove so much a remarkable advancement of the Egyptians in the laws and conditions of art, but only an extraordinary knowledge and skill in the *mechanical handicrafts* necessary for the erection of great edifices.

3rd. The "*Chartumim*" (חרטמים), no doubt the priests, were the representatives of the learning of the Egyptians. They are described as interpreters of dreams (Gen. xli. 8, 24), and performers of miracles by magical artifices (Exod. vii. 11, 22; viii. 3, 14, 15). But it is impossible to designate such knowledge with the august name of wisdom. We need only compare the different ancient translations of that word. The Septuagint renders *quacks*, the Vulgate, *soothsayers* or *evil-doers*, Kimchi and Vers. Venet., *experienced in nativities*. And if, therefore, Moses, in consequence of his adoption by the king's daughter, was even admitted into the caste of the priests (of which the king himself was a member), and if he was even educated in all the knowledge which that caste could impart, he could not derive therefrom those elevated and sublime truths which constitute the character of Mosaism. The *astronomical knowledge* of the Egyptians, indispensable for the regulation of their agricultural labours, and the phenomena of the Nile, degenerated into *astrology*; and the science was thus converted into a superstition. But all these are mere external or secular accomplishments; we approach now the *religious* ideas of the Egyptians.

4th. Of the notion of *monotheism*, we find, in Egypt, no trace whatever. The assumption of numerous writers, therefore, that Moses learned, besides other important truths, the doctrine of Monotheism in the Egyptian mysteries, is utterly ludicrous. In general, the value of the information derived from the ancient, even Greek, mysteries, has been greatly overrated. Cicero (de Finibus, lib. i; de Legibus, lib. ii), remarks merely, that the initiated were convinced, that many deities worshipped by the nation, had originally been mortals, deified after their death; and that a future life was reserved to man. S. D. Luzzato observes: "We are justified in supposing, that the ancient mysteries, far from rejecting the pagan superstitions, were nothing but idolatrous ceremonies, which excited the contempt of such men as Alcibiades, and not a feeling of veneration, which the pure doctrine of monotheism, with its sublime truths, would have necessarily inspired." This was also the opinion of Hegel (Philosophie der Geschichte, p. 163): "In these secret assemblies (the mysteries) no pure philosophical truths were discussed, nor was, as many believe, the unity of God taught there in opposition to pagan polytheism. The mysteries were, on the contrary, ancient religious ceremonies; and it is an unhistorical and absurd conceit to seek in them profound philosophical truths."—"To trace the quadriliteral name of the God of Israel to a foreign origin, is a vain and frivolous task, a resultless toil" (*Gesen. Thes.* pp. 577, 578); that it is impossible to derive it from an Egyptian etymology has already long since been effectually proved; the name *Jao*, which is undoubtedly identical with the tetragrammaton, was only introduced by the Gnostics about the beginning of the Christian era, but is not found on any Egyptian monument (compare notes on iii. 14).

5th. The Egyptians certainly believed in a kind of *after-life*, and even in reward and punishment in the Hades (Amenthes), in which Osiris (here called Serapis), and Isis (or Dionysius and Ceres), reigned and judged. But all these notions were conceived in a spirit of gross materialism. Herodotus (ii. 123) observes: "The Egyptians were the first who ventured to assert that the soul of man is immortal; but, if the body decays, it enters into a new-born animal; but if it had migrated through all land- and sea-animals and fowls, it passes again into a human body; and this

migration is accomplished in three thousand years." And Diodorus (i. 60, 61) writes: "The Egyptians consider the period of life on earth very insignificant; but attach the highest value to a quiet life after death. They call, therefore, the dwellings of the living only temporary habitations, but the tombs of the dead are regarded as the eternal abodes Therefore they bestow little care on the erection of their houses, whilst they lavish incredible attention and expence on the construction of their tombs." If we combine these two passages of Herodotus and Diodorus, we can understand: *a.* Why the Egyptians took such infinite pains to preserve the dead bodies by mummification, since the existence of the soul was believed to depend on that of the body; and, *b.* Why they strove to secure an undisturbed resting-place for the bodies in those huge tombs, carved, with astounding exertion and perseverance, often occupying the greatest part of their lives, out of rocks and mountains, covered with numberless paintings and inscriptions, and, most probably, often marked by colossal pyramids; since these tombs were regarded as the eternal habitations of man. From these points of view, the paramount importance ascribed by the Egyptians to an honourable burial is explicable; and the public judgments held over the corpses, had, as their only end, to decide whether the conduct of the deceased was such as to entitle him to this privilege.—Although these notions may form the first steps towards a refined belief in immortality, it is obvious that they are, in themselves, far from revealing the internal affinity between the human soul and that eternal spirit which pervades the universe. But the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul (*metempsychosis*), especially in the form conceived by the Egyptians, is incompatible with every true notion of the dignity of man; it amounts, in fact, merely to the opinion held by Pythagoras, also, of the indestructibility of matter, which changes its forms, but is never entirely annihilated. Thus the Egyptians could not impart to Moses the doctrine of immortality, which he preached from the beginning, in the history of man, who is created "in the image of God." We need, therefore, only mention, without refuting the perverse statement of Tacitus, Hist. v. 5, that the Israelites shared the Egyptian notions concerning interment, and the infernal regions, "*Corpora condere quam cremare, e more Aegyptio; eademque cura et de infernis persuasio.*"

6th. Perhaps no people on earth has carried the abomination of *animal-worship* to such an incredible excess as the Egyptians. From the majestic denizens of the desert, and the waves, down to the harmless domestic animals, and the most diminutive insects, there was scarcely any which was not, in some district of Egypt, adored with all the pomp of heathen worship, with magnificent temples, hosts of priests and endless sacrifices; and many were even, after their death, embalmed and entombed in holy sepulchres. Even Greek travellers were struck by this extraordinary species of idolatry; but Clemens Alexandrinus (*Pædag.* lib. ii. § 3) gives us, as an eye-witness, the following graphic description: "Among the Egyptians, the temples are surrounded with groves and consecrated pastures; they are furnished with propylæa, and their courts are encircled with an infinite number of columns; their walls glitter with foreign marbles, and paintings of the highest art; the nave is resplendent with gold, and silver, and electrum, and variegated stones from India and Ethiopia; the adytum is veiled by a curtain wrought with gold. But if you pass beyond into the remotest part of the enclosure, hastening to behold something yet more excellent, and seek for the image which dwells in the temple, a *pastophorus* (shrine-bearer), or some one else of those who minister in sacred things, with a pompous air, singing a Pæan in the Egyptian tongue, draws aside a small portion of the curtain, as if about to show us the god, and makes us burst into a loud laugh; for no god is found within, but a cat, or a crocodile, or a serpent sprung from the soil, or some such brute animal. The Egyptian deity appears—a beast rolling itself upon a purple coverlet." (Compare notes on xx. 4—6). We shall, in our remarks on the ten plagues, have occasion to

dilate upon the vast and almost inconceivable extent of this superstition, and leave the reader to decide if the sublimely pure Mosaic notions of the deity can in any degree be traced to the grossest of all idolatries. We therefore omit here all reference to the human sacrifices not uncommon in Egypt, and to the other rude and abject forms of divine worship, to the veneration paid to the celestial bodies, and other objects of nature, and even to the vegetable creation, and add merely, for our own immediate purpose, the express remarks of Manetho (Josephus *c. Apion*, i. 26): "Thus he (Moses) gave the Israelites laws altogether opposed to the institutions and customs of Egypt," and of Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 5): "The Egyptians worship most of the animals and compound images; the Jews conceive God, with the spirit alone, as one deity" (*Ægyptiū pleraque animalia effigiesque compositas venerantur; Judæi mente sola unumque numen intelligunt*).

In this whole exposition, we have not alluded to the *time* when the Egyptians attained to that degree of civilisation which they might have enjoyed; and an unbiassed enquiry leads us to doubt as much of the antiquity as of the extent of the learning of the Egyptians. Except the architectural monuments, many of which no doubt belong to a very remote antiquity, we have no earlier documents concerning their culture than the descriptions of *Herodotus* (about 440 B.C.), *Manetho* (270?), *Eratosthenes* (240), and *Diodorus Siculus* (about the beginning of the vulgar era), and even these authorities contain mostly but "a mixture of dry, contradictory numbers and lists of names, of miraculous stories, myths, astronomical propositions, and enigmatical allegories" (*Rotteck*, i. p. 132). There is, therefore, nothing that compels us to suppose that limited culture which the ancient Egyptians possessed, to have existed already at so early a period as that of Moses, who was, consequently, neither educated in the "wisdom of Egypt," nor, if this had been the case, would he have derived great and sublime truths from those sources (compare *Göthe*, *Westöstlicher Divan*, p. 162: "Whether Moses was protected by a princess, or educated at the court — all this had no influence upon his character and opinions.") From 1 Kings v. 10, where Solomon is said to have surpassed "all the wisdom of Egypt," or from Isaiah xix. 11, where the "wise councillors of Pharaoh" are mentioned, we can deduce no distinct conclusions concerning the degree or character of Egyptian culture; the remark of Homer (*Odyssey*, iv. 231), "that every Egyptian is an able physician, excelling all other men," refers only to an empirical practice of healing by means of herbs or vegetable drugs; and the observation of Josephus (*contra Apion*. ii. 14), that "the study of wisdom was, in Egypt, from the beginning, committed to the priests," leaves us equally doubtful as regards the nature of that philosophy, which we might, however, with some probability imagine, from its being coupled with "the worship of the gods." It is certainly not wisdom, in the sense of *philosophy*, which was only considerably more than a millennium after Moses, from Greece, transplanted to Egypt. True, Herodotus calls the Egyptians prudent and practical people (*λογίωτατοι*), on account of their commerce and industry; but this signifies merely their worldly shrewdness, to which they attached a high importance, so that they were almost proverbial for their cunningness and stratagems (see *Bohlen*, *Ancient India*, ii. 121). Even Juvenal (*Satires*, xv.), in so late a period as the first century after Christ, does not sketch a flattering picture of the religious enlightenment of the Egyptians, when he says:—

"How Egypt, mad with superstition grown,
Makes gods of monsters, but too well is known.
'Tis mortal sin an *onion* to devour,
Each clove of *garlic* is a sacred pow'r.
Religious nation sure, and blest abodes,
Where ev'ry garden is o'er-run with gods." (*Dryden's Translation.*)

(Compare *Ovid*, *Metam.* v. 326, *et seq.*) Many ancient writers thought, indeed, Egyptian learning insufficient for the education of Moses, and they call in the aid of Greek, Assyrian and Chaldean preceptors—an idea as arbitrary as it is unfounded (see *Philo*, opp. ii. 84. Compare *Clem. Alex.* *Strom.* i. 148). Moses has, it is true, not unfrequently based his laws on institutions of the Egyptians, or other nations, whose ideas the Israelites had, by long associations, imbibed; but, whenever he does this, he infuses into the old forms a spirit of purity which changes entirely their original perverse tendency, and which converts them into most beneficial and sublime doctrines (see note on xii. 1, towards the end).

CHAPTER III.

SUMMARY.—Moses, as shepherd of his father-in-law, leads his flock to Mount Horeb; God appears to him in a burning bush; He promises to rescue the Israelites through him from the oppression of the Egyptians; and to lead them into, and to make them inherit, the land of Canaan. For this purpose God commands Moses to return to Egypt; but he hesitates. To inspire him with hope and confidence, God reveals to him His holy name, which was not yet known to his ancestors; and orders him to ask of Pharaoh only a leave of three days to worship in the desert. God in His prescience knows that Pharaoh will not consent; He is therefore determined to inflict upon Egypt fearful plagues; then only would the king allow their departure, which they would effect after having received from the Egyptians very considerable gifts in gold, silver, and raiment.

AND Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the Midianite priest, and he led the flock ¹behind the desert, and came to the mountain of God, to Horeb.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—To the backside of.

1. That *Moses pastured the flock of Jethro his father-in-law* is so natural among a nomadic tribe, whose chief wealth consists in cattle, that the opinion of Philo and many Rabbinical expounders of the sacred volume, according to whom Moses—as later David—was ordained to feed the flock as a preparation for his great mission as pastor of the people of Israel, appears as an unnecessary, though ingenious, allegorical interpretation. It must, however, be admitted, that the solemn solitude of the dreary desert materially contributed to prepare the mind of Moses for the sublime commission for which Providence had selected him, to dispose his thoughts to sacred reflection, and to mature his plans for the deliverance of his people from that thralldom which gnawed at his sympathetic heart with undiminished grief, even after a separation of nearly half a century. — About the name “Jethro,” see note to ii. 18; and about “priest of Midian,” to ii. 16.—*And*

he led his flock behind the desert. Moses naturally led his flock from the sterile desert which the Midianites inhabited (see on ii. 15), south-wards *behind the desert*, to the fertile and fruitful regions of Mount Sinai, whither the nomadic shepherds generally drive their flocks when all the other parts of the peninsula are destitute of water and of pasture. — *The mountain of God*, so called by way of anticipation (prolepsis), because the glory of God appeared here at a later time to the lawgiver. Targum Onkelos: “And he came to the mountain where the majesty of the Lord revealed itself.” Josephus, blending truth and fiction, observes (*Antiq.* II. xii. 1): “Afterwards he drove his flocks to Mount Sinai to feed them. This is the highest mountain in these regions [which is not accurate], and the best for pasturage; for its herbage was excellent, and it had not been before fed upon; for as the native tribes believed that God dwelt there, the

2. And an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of ²the thornbush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire; but the bush was not consumed. 3. And Moses said, ³I will just go thither and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. 4. And when the Lord saw that he went thither to see, God called to him out of the midst of the bush,

² *Engl. Vers.*—A bush.

³ I will now go aside.

shepherds dared not to approach it.”—As the Mount Horeb, by the promulgation of the law which there took place, has become of paramount importance for the history of mankind, and as the Sinaitic peninsula in which that mountain is situated forms the principal scene of the wanderings of Israel after their Exodus from Egypt, it will not be inappropriate to introduce a geographical sketch of this peninsula, with especial regard to “the mountain of God.” See the supplementary note at the end of the chapter.

2. *Thornbush*; *rubus vulgaris*, or *rubus sanctus*, or *Oxycantha arabica* (hawthorn bush), which grows abundantly in the vicinity of Sinai. The *Septuagint* renders *βάρος*, bramble—which is, however, according to Pococke, nowhere found in those parts. The idea that the presence of God manifests itself in the splendour of light or fire, was prevalent throughout all nations of antiquity. In Homer (*Odyss.* xix. 36—40), Minerva appears in a radiance of fire. The Persians adored the fire, from the belief that it enshrouds the gods. Similar notions were entertained by the Chaldeans. God revealed himself in fire not only to Moses (in our text, and xix. 18; xxiv. 17), but also to Elijah (1 Kings xix. 12), Ezekiel (i. 4, 13), and Daniel (vii. 9).—Josephus thus explains our text: “The fire which surrounded the thornbush did not injure the blossoms of the tree, nor did it destroy any of the fructiferous branches.”—Some represent the whole vision related in this chapter as a dream of Moses, a conjecture destitute of every foundation; others suggest, with as little propriety, that Moses saw the setting sun behind the thicket, so

that the bush *appeared* to be in flames; others imagine an issue of phosphoretted hydrogen from a volcanic fissure!—The burning bush which is not consumed has frequently been used as a suitable allegory of the fate of Israel, which, although despised among the nations as the thornbush among the trees—oppressed, degraded, and afflicted—could never be destroyed. Abarbanel and others apply it more especially to the sufferings of Israel in Egypt, from which they came forth with enhanced vigour. The symbol of the Scotch church is likewise a burning bush, with the words beneath it: “Nec tamen consumebatur.”

4. *God called unto him.* The *angel* of God, who appeared to Moses (ver. 2) is, according to our verse and the whole following relation, God himself, with a change very usual in the Holy Scriptures: the *angel* calls Abraham (*Gen.* xxii. 11), and it is, in fact, *God* himself (ver. 16); the *angel* of God appeared to Gideon (*Judg.* vi. 11), whilst he is in reality *God* (ver. 14). Similarly *Gen.* xxi. 17 and 19; xxxi. 11, 13, 16. *Judg.* xiii. 3, 22. Ebn Ezra accounts for this change in a twofold manner: 1. The angel is called God, because he is His delegated messenger; or, 2. God (*Jehovah*) seeing that Moses was going to the bush, commanded His angel (*Elohim*) to call him; “for *Elohim* is no proper noun, but a noun appellative, implying everything divine and incorporeal.” The first explanation is more acceptable; the latter, forced in itself, would not even apply to the other analogous passages. “A similar identification of the Deity with its messengers is observable in almost every apparition of angels. Ori-

and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here *am I*. 5. And He said, Approach not hither: put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy ground. 6. And He said, I *am* the God of thy ¹ fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. 7. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people who *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Father.

ginally, and especially where the primitive notions are faithfully preserved, the Deity itself descends to its favourites in a mortal shape; but gradually the emanations of its power in nature are regarded as the heralds and instruments of its decrees (Ps. civ. 4; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16), and are personified according to the manner of the Orient, as is even the case with the spirit." "Wherever God appears in the symbol of any natural phenomenon, this is His angel, or His visible agent, or, in the beautiful language of Moses: 'The name of God is in him'" (*Herder, Geist der Hebr. Poes. ii. p. 48*).—*Moses, Moses*. The repetition of the name is intended to rouse the attention of Moses with greater force. Comp. Genes. xxii. 11. *Here am I*; an expression of willingness and ready obedience, as Gen. xxii. 11; xxxi. 11; Isa. vi. 8. Comp. *Emunah Ramah, ii. 6*.

5. The shoes of the Orientals (as those of the Greeks and Romans) were, and are still, mere soles of leather or wood, which were fastened under the feet, and tied above them with a thong or latchet (Gen. xix. 23). Jonathan translates therefore here, *thy sandals*. The Egyptians were, however, famous for the sumptuousness of their sandals, which form still one of the greatest ornaments of their attire, being elaborately embroidered with flowers and other figures wrought in silk, silver and gold (*Wilkinson, Anc. Egypt. iii. 364*). Shoes are, in the East, seldom worn in the apartments in paying visits; they are usually put off in the ante-chambers

(comp. *Plato, Sympos. p. 213*). To enter a place of worship with covered feet is considered as an act of the greatest irreverence. Jamieson, (in Paxton's Illustrations, i. p. 298, note), observes: "The lobby of their mosques is filled with shoes, just as the lobby of a house, or recess in a church, is filled with hats amongst us." Pythagoras also, most probably following an Egyptian custom, enjoins on his disciples to sacrifice and to enter the temple unshod. Even in the remotest antiquity it was a general custom to approach barefoot those sacred spots, where the Deity was believed to be present; thus, in our passage, and perfectly so in Josh. v. 15, where, on a similar occasion, the same command is, almost in the identical words of our verse, addressed to Joshua; and the Hebrew priests probably performed their sacred duties in the temple unshod (as is even now done by the whole people on the holiest day in the year, the day of atonement; see also 2 Sam. xv. 30, and Berach. lxii. 2). Many find in this practice a similar mark of respect and reverence as in our custom of uncovering the head; others see therein an act of cleanliness which, as the ritual emblem of internal purity, is one of the greatest virtues among the Orientals; still, others consider it as a kind of pious self-castigation, just as the Roman matrons went once in procession unshod to the temple of Vesta (*Ovid, Fast. vi. 397*). The first reason is the most plausible.—*Holy ground*. The grandeur of the scenery around the three majestic peaks

about their taskmasters; ²indeed, I know their sorrows. 8. And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them out of that land into a good and large land, into a land flowing with milk and honey; into the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 9. Now, therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come to me, and I have also seen

² *Engl. Vers.*—For.

of Horeb impressed from the earliest times the wandering tribes of the Arabs with awe and veneration; and the region was commonly considered as a sacred locality (see ver. 1).

6. *I am the God of thy fathers.* The Hebrew word *father* is here used collectively, like xv. 2, "the God of my fathers." To understand it of Abraham only, because he was the first worshipper of God among the ancestors of Moses, would be inappropriate, on account of the following words: the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which are an explanatory apposition to "God of thy fathers." Ebn Ezra remarks, that the Lord revealed Himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and not as the God of Levi, Kohath, and Amram, who were his nearest relatives, because the former were prophets, and the ancestors of all Israel.—*And Moses hid his face.* Sept. ἀνέστρεψε, *averted his face.* For he was afraid to look upon God. Moses feared to look upon the divine apparition, which according to a very general notion nobody can behold without either losing his sight or his life (see Gen. xvi. 13; Dent. xviii. 16. Comp. *Homer*, *Odys.* xvi. 161). *Albo*, (*Ikkarim* ii. 29), assigns the reason that Moses covered his eyes, in order not to be dazzled by the splendour of the fire, and not to be diverted from the divine ideas communicated to him; for if the external senses are occupied, the reflective powers lose their energy.

7. *Indeed, I know their sorrows.* The usual rendering: "for I know their sorrows," is illogical; we have therefore

preferred to take יָדָע here as a particle of protestation: *indeed* (like ver. 12), in unison with the emphatical and forcible character of the whole verse (see note to i. 19).

8. *And I came down to deliver them.* Targum Onkelos renders: "And I revealed myself."—A brief description of the climate, extent, and fertility of Palestine will be given on Gen. xii. 7. *Into the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites, etc.* Although "Canaanites" is the general name for all the nations which inhabited the land of Canaan, they are not seldom enumerated as one particular tribe, or rather as a certain kind of tribes, namely probably—according to the original signification of the word Canaan—the inhabitants of the *lower regions*, i. e., those tribes which lived near the coast of the Mediterranean and in the plains of the Jordan (see Gen. xiii. 7; Num. xiii. 29). Of the ten nations, the subjugation of which God promised to Abraham (Gen. xv. 19—21), six only are mentioned here, as these constituted the more important part of the population of Canaan.

9. *Now, therefore, behold, etc.* These words refer, on the one hand, back to ver. 7, which contains a similar sentence; and point, on the other hand, forward to the following verse, with which it stands in a causal connection: "Because, then, I have heard the cry of the children of Israel, go to Pharaoh and lead them out of Egypt"

10. *And bring thou forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. It*

the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. 10. Come now, therefore, and I will send thee to Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. 11. And Moses said to God, Who *am* I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? 12. And

has often been asked by Biblical students, why it was necessary to lead the Israelites from Egypt, where they all had been born and brought up, and which, by their long sojourn through so many generations, they must have begun to consider as their own country; especially as their exit from Egypt exposed them to so many dangers and difficulties necessarily attendant on the march through the desert, and the military operations against warlike tribes; whilst God, if he wished to relieve them, might have inclined the heart of Pharaoh in their favour, instead of hardening it against them, and might thus have converted their abodes in Egypt into homes of happiness and comfort. The obvious answer to this question is, that the Israelites would not have been able to worship the God of their fathers, and to receive the Law, in Egypt, a country replete with idolatrous abominations; and in ver. 12 the whole aim and end of the Exodus appear to be hinted at in the words: "And this shall be a sign unto thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, *you shall serve God upon this mountain.*"

11. The best commentary on this verse is given by Josephus (Antiq. II. xii. 2), who introduces Moses uttering the following words: "I am at a loss to comprehend, how I, a man of no rank or influence, should be able to persuade my countrymen to leave a land already so long inhabited by them, and to follow me into the country to which I might lead them; or, if I even succeed to induce the Israelites to listen to my words, how can I force Pharaoh to allow them to depart, by whose services and industry his national prosperity is so

materially enhanced." The diffidence of Moses, which was the result of modesty (Num. xii. 3), not of disobedience, contrasted his humble pastoral condition with the exalted position of the mighty king of Egypt and his proud courtiers, to whom, he thought, it would be impossible even to obtain access; he doubted further his capabilities, which he believed were insufficient for the difficult task, to lead a great nation through a trackless desert into a distant country. The answer of Moses accurately corresponds with the exhortation of God in the preceding verse; and the following verse removes in the same order the objections of Moses. The hesitation of the lawgiver, in accepting a great and dangerous mission has several analogies in the most pious servants of God: Samuel fears the revenge of Saul, when God commands him to go into the house of Jesse to anoint David (1 Sam. xvi. 2). Jonah attempts to evade his charge to the Ninevites; and Jeremiah, when chosen by God as prophet, exclaims in an objection similar to that of Moses: "O Lord God, behold, I cannot speak, for I am but a youth" (Jerem. i. 6). However, it deserves to be remarked, that among the many doubts and objections, which Moses raised against his mission, fear for his life—the most obvious of all—is not mentioned, a sufficient proof, that not timidity to undergo danger, but want of confidence in himself, made the modest messenger doubt so despondingly and hesitatingly. And Calvin already observes, that Moses, after having slain the Egyptian, preferred a voluntary exile to a reconciliation with the tyrannical king. He left Egypt in faith (Hebr. xi. 27). The diffidence of Moses to appear before

He said, Certainly, I will be with thee; and this *shall be* a sign to thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God upon this mountain. 13. And Moses said to God, Behold, *when* I come to the children of Israel, and shall say to them, The God of your fathers hath sent me to

Pharaoh, not because he was banished as a murderer, but because he was but a mean shepherd, would be strange indeed, considering that he was educated at the royal court, were it not sufficiently accounted for by the circumstances, that the king, whose daughter had adopted him, lived no more (iii. 23), and that in the period of about forty years, which had elapsed since his flight, he must have become a perfect stranger to the whole royal household; so that Winer's remark with reference to our verse (Bibl. Dict. ii. p. 110): "Well might fable have been busy in adorning the history of the infancy and youth of the great legislator," is devoid of every solid basis.

12. *And this shall be a sign to thee, that I have sent thee*: when thou hast brought forth, etc.—Ebn Ezra, Rashi, and Mendelssohn, suppose the sign to be the burning bush, which was miraculously preserved; just so would Moses be rescued from all the snares and persecutions of Pharaoh; so that the words: "when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt" begin a new sentence; for the whole end of the deliverance of the Israelites was the law to be promulgated on Mount Horeb, and the covenant to be concluded between God and His people.—But this interpretation, forced in itself, would at least require the conjunction *and* before *when thou hast brought forth*; without it the sentence is extremely abrupt. Abarbanel explains: "I will be with thee; and the wonders which thou, a weak octogenarian, wilt perform, strengthened by my assistance, will be the sign that I have sent thee." But the ellipsis is too bold; besides, the following part of the verse would be liable to the same objection as the interpretation of Mendelssohn.—We have,

therefore, with the authorised version, translated so, that the sign, or rather proof, is, that the Israelites will sacrifice before the Mount Sinai. Even Rashi adduces this interpretation as admissible. The phrase *you shall serve God* is here also the symbolical, but hidden expression for the intended *revelation*.—It might appear surprising, that God gave Moses, in this case, a sign, which was fulfilled only several months after the Exodus, and which could not encourage and strengthen him for the great difficulties he had to encounter *before* its realization. But similar signs to be verified by future events were not unusual (see Isa. xxxvii. 30; 1 Sam. ii. 34); and one promise was corroborated by another assurance. Besides, by far the greatest hardships and tribulations, the severest trials and dangers, awaited Moses and the Israelites only after the legislation on Mount Sinai, during their forty years' wanderings in the solitary and dreary wilderness, in their warfare against inimical tribes, and in their multifarious troubles and privations.

13. *Beho'd when I come*, etc. Moses asked God, under what name he was to announce Him to the Israelites, or, according to Maimonides (More Nebuch. i. 63), under which attribute he should say, He had appeared to him. The name of the Deity is no matter of indifference, as it conveys in the precisest possible form His power, His nature, and His relation to His worshippers. But the Egyptians, who, according to Herodotus (ii. 4, 50), were the most ancient nation which introduced names for their deities, advanced in this respect soon to an extreme, bestowing upon the same god a multiplicity of names, as if incapable of adequately expressing his holiness, his grandeur, and

you; and if they say to me, What *is* His name? what shall I say to them? 14. And God said to Moses,

his remaining attributes, by one or a few appellations: and thus Isis was "called by an infinite number of names," whereas the prophet Zachariah (xiv. 10), describes it as a symptom of the full and universal knowledge and the pure adoration of God: "that He will be *one* and *His name one*." If, therefore, the Israelites were to listen to the exhortation of Moses, he must necessarily address them in the service of a God, whose very name inspired confidence and awe. He must bear a name which unmistakably describes His existence and ruling Providence; for in the protracted period of their servitude and oppression, they had almost forgotten the holy name of God, under which He was known to their ancestors, and they had relapsed into the idolatries of the heathens, into Sabeanism and other superstitions; except perhaps the tribe of Levi, which is said to have invariably and faithfully preserved the true knowledge of God, which was hence designed to receive the *crown of priesthood*. Moses therefore asked God, which name, implying eternity and omnipotence, would be most calculated to arouse the Israelites at once from their lethargic indifference, and to fill the degraded people with courage and confidence. Maimonides in the preface to his Commentary on the Mishna, observes: "Whenever a man came forth in Israel professing to be gifted with prophecy, the people asked first, who it was that had inspired and sent him; and if he answered, that he had his prophecy as an emanation from a star or any deity except God, they stoned him without further investigation. Therefore Moses was quite justified in asking who that Being was, who spoke to him, and in whose name he was to console, exhort, and deliver the Israelites." In the Bible, indeed, the "name of God" appears in many passages to be used synonymously with God himself, and His internal essence (Deut. xxviii. 58. Lev. xix. 12; xxiv. 11. Isa. xxx. 27

Micah v. 3. Ps. vii. 18; xx. 2; xci. 15, etc.); and impressed with this great importance of the divine appellation, the author of the book Cusari, devotes an elaborate treatise (iv. 1. *et seq.*) to this subject.

14. *I am he who is*.. "*I am*" has sent me to you. This is the name with which God orders Moses to announce Him to the Israelites, and with which the tetragrammaton (*Jehovah*) in the following verse is identical. If we compare herewith the third verse of the sixth chapter: "And I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but under my name *Jehovah* I was not known to them," we have a safe guide for the historical and etymological origin of the holy divine name. We shall first review the results of the modern researches on this important point, and then proceed to introduce the different interpretations, to which the obscure phrase of our text has given rise:

I. *The name Jehovah is of genuine Hebrew derivation.*

1. It is not of *Egyptian* origin, as has so often, even in our time, been advanced. This supposition, based on a wrong conception of Eusebius, has been successfully and ably refuted by Didymus Taurinensis.—The inscription, which Plutarch (on Isis, § 9) mentions to have existed in the temple of Isis in Sais: "I am all that has been, that is, and that will be, and my veil has by no mortal yet been lifted," has no internal resemblance with the expression of our text: "I am he who is." Isis is only the personification of nature, whose secret workings no mortal can explore; she is the parent of all existence, and to her everything that is must return—a conception common to all nations of antiquity, and not implying any pure monotheistic idea. Besides, the authenticity of that inscription has justly been questioned. On the other hand, such passages as Exod. v. 2, where Pharaoh exclaims, "who is *Jehovah*, that I should listen to his voice, to let the children of Israel

I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me to you.

go? I do not know *Jehovah*," and such expressions as "the God of the Hebrews," show clearly, that even in the time of Moses, the holy name of God was either entirely or essentially unknown to the Egyptians, which fact Tacitus (Hist. v. 5) expressly testifies; see supplementary note to ii. 10.

2. It is not of *Phoenician* origin, as Hartmann (p. 156) and many others, leaning on certain fragments of the Phoenician author, Sanchuniathon, assert. It is now generally acknowledged, that those fragments are spurious compilations of the literary adventurer Philo Byblius, who lived between the reigns of Nero and Hadrian; and who can therefore prove nothing for so remote a time as the ante-Mosaic period.

3. It is only necessary to mention the absurd suppositions, that *Jehovah* is to be traced to a *Chinese* origin, or that (according to a certain oracle of Apollo Clarius), Dionysus and the sun bore the name of *Jao*, or that the resemblance of sound proves the original identity of *Jehovah* and Jovis.

We are, therefore, fully justified in subscribing the opinion of Gesenius (Thes. ii. p. 577): "that those labour in vain who strive to find a foreign origin to the name of *Jehovah*;" and in asserting that the Tetragrammaton is the peculiar and exclusive designation of the God of Israel.

II. The vowels which are at present given to the name *Jehovah*, do not originally belong to it, but are borrowed from *Adonai*; for already before the time of the Septuagint the holy name of God was, according to a tradition based on Levit. xxiv. 16, considered too majestic to be pronounced, and was, therefore, called the *name par excellence*. The Talmud (Sanhedr. 90, a) enjoins: "Even he who *thinks* the name of God with its true letters, forfeits his future life;" and according to Maimonides (Jad Chasak., cap. 14, § 10), after the death of Simon the Just, the name *Adonai*, or another appel-

lation consisting of twelve letters, was, even in the temple, substituted for the Tetragrammaton; and so the true pronunciation of that name was ultimately forgotten. Jerome, Origen, Eusebius, and others mention, that in their time "the Jews wrote the name in their copies of the Bible in Samaritan characters, instead of the common Hebrew or Chaldee, in order to veil it from the profane inspection of strangers" (Pict. Bibl.); and Josephus (Antiq. III. v. 4) did not even dare to write down the Ten Commandments in the words proclaimed on Mount Sinai, but only their sense and import. The author of the speculative work *Emunah Ramah* (Abraham Ben David Halevi), in discussing the various names of God, writes (iii. 6): "But the name *Jehovah* we are not allowed to pronounce. In its original meaning, it is conferred upon no other being, and therefore we abstain from giving any explanation of it."

III. The correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, which was by tradition confided only to the most pious men of their respective ages, is *Jahaveh* or *Jahveh*, in accordance with Theodoret (Quaest. xv. in Exodum i. p. 133). The Samaritans pronounce it, 'IABE, in perfect harmony with the explanation given in our text.

IV. Thus the holy name of God denotes the Eternal Being; He who is immutable, subject to no change through all generations. This explanation is corroborated by a variety of passages of the Old Testament. Compare Malach. iii. 6: "I am the Lord—I am immutable" (see *Philo*, De Incorrupt. Mundi, p. 950: "God is always equal and identical with himself, admitting neither of a change to a higher, nor to a lower degree"). We may also adduce the excellent comment of Plutarch on the word EI, *Thou art*, inscribed above the door of the temple of Apollo at Delphi: "This title is not only proper, but peculiar to God; because He alone is *being*, for mortals have no participation of

15. And God said moreover to Moses, Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me to you: this is my name

true being, because that which begins and ends, and is continually changing, is never *one*, nor the same, nor in the same state. The deity on whose temple this word was written was called Apollo—

Ἀπόλλων—from a *negative*, and πολλός *many*, because he is *one*, his name simple, his essence uncompounded." Gesenius (Thes. ii. 577, note) proposes to take *Jahveh* as the future *Hiphil*, signifying: "He who made exist, called into existence," the Creator; but this is no *new* attribute of the Deity (vi.3), unknown to the patriarchs, who revered him already as the *Lord*, that is, the Creator of heaven and earth (Gen. xiv. 19, 22). We cannot see that this idea, which we have proved to be the fundamental notion of the holy name of God, is too profound or metaphysical for the simple age in which Moses lived; and the hypothesis of Koppe and others, that *I am* that *I am* means: "I am he whose essence is not to be described or expressed by any name;" or, "I am he who has no name," is well refuted by Hengstenberg, who remarks, that such a deity was certainly not calculated to afford much comfort and consolation to the Israelites in the severe oppression under which they then sighed. Yet Rabbi Jehudah Halevi, in his celebrated work, *Cusari* (iv.3), offers a similar, as it were negative, explanation, which, however, being one of the earliest philosophical illustrations of our subject, is too interesting to be omitted here: "By appearing to Moses under the name *Jehovah*, God wished to preclude all subtle speculations on the true nature of His essence, the knowledge of which is unattainable; and when Moses asked: 'If the children of Israel should inquire after Thy name, what shall I say?' God answered him: 'Why should they search after something which they will eternally be unable to comprehend? (just as the angel said to Manoah: 'Why askest thou

thus after my name, seeing it is secret or wondrous?' Judg. xiii. 18). Tell them only, 'I am,' that is, 'He who is,' or the eternal God, always manifest to those who seek me." We must repeat, that however sublime this interpretation of the divine name is in itself, its metaphysical ideality would have little contributed to secure for Moses any degree of enthusiasm among the Israelites, who, sunk in materialism, expected to see the power and competency of the Lord expressed in His very name.

V. After having thus developed the most probable—we may almost say authentic—meaning of the words, *I am that I am*, and of the name *Jehovah*, we proceed to enumerate the opinions of the more important interpreters, as nearly as possible in a chronological order. 1. *Sept.*, ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν, "I am that I am;" and just so 2. *Vulgate*, "Ego sum qui sum;" 3. *Aquila* and *Theodot.*, ἔσομαι ὃς ἔσομαι, "I shall be that I shall be," quite literally, but without distinct meaning; 4. *Onkel.* and the *Syrian* and *Persian* translators have retained the Hebrew words; 5. *Saadijah*, "I am the Eternal one, who never ceases;" 6. *Targ. Jonath.*, "He who spoke and the world was; He who spoke and the universe was." 7. Similarly *Targum Jerusalem*, "He who said to the world, Exist! and it was; and who will say to it, Exist! and it will be." 8. *Rashi*, "I shall be with them in their present Egyptian slavery, as I shall be with them in their future miseries (see Talm. Berach. 9). 9. *Maimonides* (Moreh. Nebuch. i. 63), "He who exists by internal necessity." 10. *Rashbam*, "I am for ever, and therefore am able to realise my promises." 11. *Abarbanel*, "I am the prime cause of existence, not created like all the other objects of the universe, therefore not depending on any body or any thing for my existence." And similarly *Albo* (Ikkarim ii. 27), "My

for ever, and this *is* my memorial for all generations. 16. Go, and assemble the elders of Israel, and say to them, The Lord God of your fathers appeared to me, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, saying, I

existence depends only on myself; my will and intention are therefore certain to be executed;...no other being can say 'I am because I am'; but 'I am because something else is,' viz., the prime cause, on which the existence of all other beings depends." And so Boothroyd, "I am because I am, that is, self-sufficient." Vater also finds in these words, "an obscure allusion to the independence of God." This explanation, although acceptable in itself, has no necessary connection with the etymology given in our texts. 12. Mendelssohn, "I am, was, and shall be the king and ruler of the universe."—Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Ewald and Hengstenberg, adopt the translation: "I am that I am," implying the *eternity* and *immutability* of God.—God can only be named and described through himself, however laboriously human language might strive to find an appropriate name for the Deity. The reader will find highly interesting illustrations of our verse in *Maimonides* Moreh Nebuch. i. 62, 63, which deserve attentive study.

15. The abstract designation of God is here more practically and intelligibly described by the historical addition, "God of their ancestors," who existed already in the remote ages before Abraham, and who will unchangeably exist till the last generations. Mendelssohn observes, that although there is essentially no difference between *I am* in the preceding verse, and *Jehovah*: the one is pronounced as it is written; but the other is not to be spoken with its own vowels; because *I am* is the name by which God calls Himself, and He knows His own nature and attributes; but *Jehovah* is the name by which men call God, and they cannot comprehend His essence and nature. — *This is my name, etc.* The knowledge of God will never cease or disappear from the generations of man.

16. *Go and assemble the elders of Israel.* It is not impossible from these words, that the Israelites had in Egypt, on the whole, a patriarchal organization in tribes, each of which stood under its chief; the tribes were again divided into families, each of which was presided over by a *Sheikh*, or *Saken*, who was its representative in all public matters (See Exod. vi. 14, 25; xii. 21). The families stood under the authority of the heads of their respective tribes. The *Saken*, originally the oldest member of the family, is generally more an honorary designation (not "nomen ætatis," but "nomen muneris"), like *πρεσβύτερος* in Greek, and senator or patres in Latin, and like these probably elective, not hereditary dignities (see note on v. 6). These elders might frequently, in cases of dispute, have performed the functions of *judges*, although they had no material power to give force to their decisions (see note on ii. 13); moreover, these judicial functions were not their ordinary vocation, but were only exercised besides their usual occupations and pursuits. However, that organization on the one hand, and the difference of religion and language, on the other hand, produced an insurmountable barrier between the Egyptians and the Hebrews; and the latter formed, in the heart of Egypt, a separate state, the more ominous for the former, as the lapse of time seemed only to increase the inward antipathies, and to revive in the latter, with greater force, the old reminiscences and traditions handed down from their ancestors, and the hopes of a miraculous realization of the promises vouchsafed to them.—About the *Shoterim*, see note on v. 6.—Rashi explains the *elders of Israel* by "chosen and appointed as a council, for how was it possible to assemble the elders of 600,000 men?" and similarly Ebn Ezra, coun-

have surely ¹looked upon you and upon that which is done to you in Egypt. 17. And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, into a land flowing with milk and honey. 18. And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt, and you shall say to him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met us, and now

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Visited you and seen.

cillors, and Septuag., "the senate of the children of Israel." But we have no account of any such council representing the whole people having existed in Egypt; and we must, therefore, assume that the chiefs of the *principal* families were assembled. The appearance of so many venerable men together with Moses was calculated to enhance, in the eyes of the king, the authority of the messenger, who thus certainly appeared as a representative of the *people*, although Pharaoh might deny him to be the delegate of the *God*, of Israel. However, we do not read in the course of the narrative, that the elders really accompanied Moses to the king (see v. 1., *et seq.*); "perhaps fear deterred them to appear before Pharaoh with such a bold request" (*Abarbanel*).—*I have surely looked upon you.* The Hebrew word here applied signifies "remembering with compassion or favour" (as in Gen. xxi. 1; 1. 24. Exod. iv. 31. Job vii. 18), wherefore Onkelos translates: "I have certainly remembered you." It expresses frequently the Providence of God, and His interposition in the works and destinies of man.

17. See ver. 8.

18. *The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met us.* Some commentators, as Rosenmüller and others, interpret these words: "The Lord God of the Hebrews is called upon us, i. e., we bear His name; we are His people." But this fact, which was long known to the Egyptians, could not be alleged by Moses and the elders as a reason why they wished just now to go

and offer sacrifices in the desert; further, this explanation offers grammatical difficulties; and in the mouth of the Hebrews, the phrase, "The Lord God of the Hebrews is called upon us," would be a superfluous tautology, whereas according to our acceptance, the request of the Israelites, to worship God at that particular period is perfectly accounted for; for they fear His chastisement and His wrath, if they do not execute that command (v. 3). The objection of Rosenmüller, that the elders could not say, "The Lord appeared to us," is of little weight; for God appeared to the whole people through Moses and Aaron.—It might be urged with surprise, that God sent Moses to Pharaoh under the pretence, that the children of Israel wished to sacrifice in the desert, whereas the real object of the journey was to leave Egypt for ever. Jewish commentators reply: God knew that Pharaoh would not grant to the Israelites even that just and moderate request (ver. 19); and that by refusing this, his obstinacy and pride would become so manifest to all, that every body must acknowledge the judgments and punishments inflicted upon Pharaoh as just and fully merited. The king himself lost thus every justification and pretext for his refusal, as the Hebrews were not legally his slaves, and as he knew that they could, according to their religious convictions, not sacrifice to their God in Egypt (see *Abarb.* on Exod. p. 11 *b.*, 12 *b.*). Similarly observes Paterson in Brown's Bible on v. 3: "Moses

let us go, we pray thee, a three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.

19. And I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go, ¹even not by a mighty hand. 20. Therefore I will stretch out my hand and smite Egypt with all my wonders, which I will do in the midst thereof; and after that he will let you go. 21. And I shall give this people favour in the eyes of the Egyptians; and it will come to pass, that when you go, you will not go empty: 22. But *every*

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—"Even" omitted.

makes an experiment on the feelings of the Egyptian monarch, not explaining in the first instance, the full amount of his demand, that from the mode of its reception, in its most mitigated form, he might judge of what he was to expect when he should state it in its full extent." And Ebn Ezra observes deferentially with regard to this subject (on x. 10): "We must not sceptically enquire into the works of God; for He has ordained all things with wisdom, although it is often concealed even before the eye of the wise."

19. *Even not by a mighty hand.* Targ. Onkelos renders either, "he will not allow you to go, because his might is great," or more probably, "even not on account of Him whose might is great." But more appropriate than either interpretation is that of Abarbanel, who explains: "God said, Pharaoh will not let you go, even not if *you* encounter and oppose him with all your power. Therefore, will I stretch out *my* hand and force him to obedience by my wonders," which interpretation is perfectly adapted to our context; for although Pharaoh, in a moment of terror, after the tenth and most fearful plague, permitted the Israelites to leave Egypt, he soon repented and retracted his consent. Others translate: he will not let you go, *unless with a mighty hand*; but the Hebrew text does not admit of this interpretation.

21. *And I will give this people favour in the eyes of the Egyptians* (see Gen. xxxix. 21). "For in general, the Egyptians,

who suffered so many plagues through Moses, might not have been very amicably disposed towards the Israelites [see, however, on i. 11]; but so great was their fear of a universal destruction, that they granted them whatever they wished, lest their departure be retarded and new miseries ensue" (*Clericus*). Compare with the promise contained in our verse, Gen. xv. 14.

22. *But every woman shall ask of her neighbour, etc.* Very frequently this conduct on the part of the Israelites has been severely castigated, and was used for the most vehement attacks against the Israelites as committing, and their God, as sanctioning, theft, falsehood, and every abject crime (see *Irenaeus*, b. iv. c. 49; *August.* contra Faustum, b. ii. c. 71, etc.). As a specimen of the virulence with which these hostilities have been directed against the Sacred Volume, we quote the following passage from the Wolfenbüttel Fragmentist (Berlin, 1786, p. 53, edited by Lessing): "If we consider the action in itself, we cannot but admit, that the whole is falsehood, deception and theft. But how, if hereunto simply the words are added: 'the Lord hath said, or commanded;' will thereby base deceit and nefarious fraud assume the character of sacred revelation? will, thereby, the most impious wickedness be converted into a pious action? Thus, it would be easy indeed to stamp falsehood as inspiration, and rancour as virtue and piety; thus we loose every test and standard of laudable and criminal deeds; thus religion and

woman shall 'ask of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, articles of silver, and articles of

- *Engl. Vers.*—Borrow.

piety differ from the most glaring villany but by a few empty words: 'God hath said it.'" However, a moderate degree of calm impartiality, and of Hebrew learning, would have prevented the outburst of this and similar effusions; and the vehemence of the accusation turns itself against the accusers themselves. The Hebrew verb *shaal* does not mean to *borrow* (as the Anglican Version also renders), but to *ask* or *demand* as a present. (So, among others, the Septuagint, Vulgate, Luther, Mendelssohn, Rosenmüller, Arnheim, Hengstenberg, Lilienthal, Harenberg, Winer, Tholuck, etc.). The same verb is more than once used in this sense; for instance, in Psalm ii. 8: "*Ask of me*, and I will give nations as thy inheritance". Compare 1 Sam. viii. 10, etc. Thus, no fraud was practised against the Egyptians, who knew that they would not receive back the vessels which they gave to the departing Israelites, and who gave them willingly, *because God inclined their hearts to the Israelites* (ver. 21). Compare xi. 3, xii. 36. In this sense writes Josephus (Antiq. II. xiv. 6): "The Egyptians honoured the Hebrews with presents; some, in order to make them depart quickly, and others from affection and friendship which they felt for them as their neighbours" (Compare Psalm cxxxv. 37: "Egypt rejoiced at their departure, for their fear had fallen upon them.") Ebn Ezra endeavours to remove the reproach by the following remark: "Some inveigh against us, and say our ancestors were thieves; but these do not see that it was commanded them by God, and we have, therefore, no right to enquire into the reason, or to question the justice of that command; for God has created everything, gives wealth to whom He pleases, and takes it again from him and gives it to his neighbour, for the whole universe belongs to Him." Similarly Augustin, Calvin, and others.

See, however, against this explanation, the arguments of Hengstenberg, (Authenticity of the Pentateuch, ii. p. 512). The manner in which I. D. Michaelis defends the command of God (that the Israelites *borrowed* originally goods from the Egyptians, and that they kept them as their property only when the Egyptians persecuted them, and thus broke their faith) is more specious than real, and has been ably commented upon by Hengstenberg (*loc. cit.* pp. 517, 518). Similar is the opinion of Lengerke, who, moreover, strangely brings the circumstances of our verse into connection with a certain pagan custom of the Syrians, practised on their "torch-festival," when golden and silver vessels were fixed on trees and burnt together with them. Still less to be approved of is the argument of Cahen, who observes: "It is easily explicable, that slaves, about to break their chains, did not scruple to deceive their old oppressors; such an action is excusable; it is even, as far as our knowledge of the manners of the ancient Asiatic nations goes, in perfect accordance with their notions. In order to judge with impartiality of the morals of a people, we must be acquainted with its own notions on what is just or unjust, but not criticise antiquity after the conceptions of our time." This argument might be tolerable, if the "deceit" did not originate in a command of *God*, who is the source of justice and righteousness, and the *unchangeable* standard of right in all times and all zones; if not in Him, who has commanded "Thou shalt not steal," and who cannot infringe His own laws, which are the necessary emanation of His divine attributes. *L. J. C. Justi*, in a treatise devoted to this subject, proves that the Israelites had a right to a considerable compensation for the houses, fields, and other property which they were obliged

gold, and raiment: and you shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and you shall plunder the Egyptians.

to leave behind in quitting Egypt. A similar opinion was already advanced by Abarbanel (fol. 11, b). "That the Israelites possessed much landed property in Egypt is more than probable," see *Lengerke*, Kenaan, p. 371. It has further been urged, that the Israelites had served the Egyptians most assiduously during several hundred years without receiving the least remuneration; for these services they could justly claim a compensation; and as they could not hope to obtain it from their oppressors with their goodwill, they had a right to secure it by stratagem. However, not the *people*, but the *kings* of Egypt had oppressed the Israelites; the former seem even to have sympathized with their miseries; they could, therefore, justly demand indemnification only from the royal exchequer, not from the Egyptian subjects. The Talmud actually relates a law-suit of the Egyptians and the Israelites, before Alexander the Great, who, after having heard the accusation of the former, and the defence of the latter, decided in favour of the Hebrews, and even believed that the "golden vessels" were not a sufficient remuneration for the great works executed by them during the protracted period of their servitude. But we repeat, that all these devices are unnecessary if we interpret the verb *shaal* as *asking* or *demanding*. Winer (ii. p. 113) observes: "The Hebrew text (iii. 21) shows, clearly enough, that this command is an act of divine retaliation, a just spoliation of the oppressors. With this view we must rest satisfied, as the Biblical

relations cannot be divested of their subjective points of view without being dissolved into nothing." The Hebrews asked silver and gold vessels from the Egyptians, before their departure, of which the latter were aware, and which Pharaoh had permitted. God turned the hearts of the Egyptians in their favour; they received the presents which they wished, and emigrated with their lawful property. *And of her that sojourneth in her house.* "The Egyptians might have rented the houses which belonged to the Israelites, and the former were thus the inhabitants of the houses of the latter" (*Rosenmüller*).—*Articles of gold and articles of silver.* About the very extensive use made by the Egyptians of vessels and ornaments of precious metals; see *Rossellini*, Monum. II. ii. p. 345; *Wilkinson*, Manners, iii. 223 (comp. Gen. xxiv. 53). Ebn Ezra finds it remarkable, that, according to our verse, the women only are to ask for those presents, whilst, in xi. 2, men as well as women are mentioned; and he answers, that the hearts of the women are more fondly attached to ornaments, as chains and bracelets. Abarbanel remarks, women, if residing in the same or a neighbouring house, have generally a more intimate intercourse with each other than men, and they asked, therefore, more universally for presents than the men.—*And you shall plunder the Egyptians.* The translation of Frisch and others, "And you will deliver the Egyptians, viz., from further plagues which would befall them by your longer sojourn in the land" is improbable.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

CHAP. III. VER. 1.

THE PENINSULA OF MOUNT SINAI.

THE southern part of Arabia Petrea, which is bordered on the east by the Ælanites Sinus, or the Bay of Akabah, and on the west by the Heroopolites Sinus, or Bay of Suez (Red Sea, סִינַי יָם), forms an almost acutely-pointed peninsula, which, if a

straight line be drawn from the northernmost point of the one bay to that of the other (from Akabah to Suez), is about 70 geographical miles long, and 30 broad, and is now inhabited by not more than 4,000 souls, who support themselves but scantily and with difficulty in that generally sterile and deserted region, and who in years of dearth do not even find sufficient pasture for their flocks. The northern boundary is a long chain of mountains extending almost uninterruptedly from west to east, called *El-Tyh* (Arab. *wandering*); at the northern declivity of which, towards Palestine, begins the desert of the same name, the complete name of which is, desert of the "wanderings of the children of Israel." These mountains, the northernmost of which has the distinct but synonymous name *El-Dhelel* (Arab. *straying*), are almost of equal height, and extend regularly eastward. The valleys of these mountains abound with excellent pastures, and have fine, though not numerous, fountains. They are at present inhabited by the tribes Terabeyn and Tyaha, the latter of which especially is comparatively rich in camels, flocks, and other property. At the eastern side of the peninsula, along the coast of the Bay of Akabah, numerous irregular chains of mountains, of inconsiderable height, cross each other in such confusion, that this whole tract offers the appearance of a continuous wilderness of barren rocks. The western part of the peninsula is stamped with a similar character, except that it includes several larger valleys. But in the south-west there is the mount *Om Schomer*, the sides of which are intersected in all directions by a variety of mountain torrents; the surface of the bare and pointed rocks is parched by the sun; all vegetation is withered, and presents everywhere the most awful desolation and the most dreary sterility. This is "the land in which nothing is sown, the land of deserts and of pits, the land of drought, and of the shadow of death; the land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt," to which the prophet Jeremiah alludes (ii. 2, 6. Compare Deut. i. 19, viii. 15; Num. xx. 5). "If I had to represent the end of the world," says Sir F. Henniker, "I would model it from Mount Sinai. It would seem as if Arabia Petrea had been an ocean of lava, and that, while its waves were running literally mountains high, it was commanded suddenly to stand still." And similarly writes Pringle: "The peculiar style of sublime and savage grandeur in this region, is certainly unequalled by anything I ever saw, and must, I imagine, be quite unique. It is like a sea of boiling lava, suddenly congealed, and rising in a confused chaos of abrupt and lofty pinnacles." About *Mount Serbal*, which lies north-west of *Om Schomer*, more on the northern part of the eastern coast of the Gulf of Suez, and which was once regarded by the pilgrims as the Sinai or Horeb of Scripture, see our note on xix. 1, 2.—The soil of this peninsula consists mostly of arid gravel (silicious earth), and produces nothing but acacias, tamarisks, and some few dwarfish shrubs. The tamarisk, one of the most common trees of that desert, yields the *Manna*, which in the month of June distils from the pores of the tree on the branches, leaves, and thorns which constantly cover the ground beneath the tree. (See note to xvi. 4). But in such parts of the peninsula as do not suffer from want of water, the soil is capable of cultivation, and can be made productive of various kinds of plants and vegetables; thus the plantations of Wadi Feiran, in the west, form an uninterrupted series of gardens and date groves, to an extent of four English miles. But the peninsula is not exempted from the ravages of the *Samum*, or glowing wind, which not seldom causes the most fearful devastations. The chief game there is the wild goat, called *Beden*, and the gazelle. On the eastern side there are serpents, with which the western regions also are partially infested. (See Num. xxi. 4, 6; Deut. viii. 15.)

The chain of mountains which runs southwards from the *El-Tyh*, reaches its greatest elevation almost in the middle of the peninsula (23° 50' N. lat.), in a mountain, which is generally (in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers) called *Sinai*, and sometimes (in Deuteronomy and Malachi) *Horeb*, but which is unconnected with the *El-Tyh*, and separated from it by white, sandy plains, and various hills called *Zebeir*. That double

name is obviously manifest from the nature of the mountain. For, rising from a common base, the rocky mass separates, at a considerable height, into two unequal peaks, the lower one, towards the north, is called *Horeb*, the higher one, towards the south, *Sinai*, which is designated by the Arabian tribes, *Dshebel Musa*, that is, Mount of Moses. It is, besides, probable, that *Horeb* was the name for that whole mountainous region generally, whilst the highest peak in that group was called *Sinai*. There, where both summits part, is a plain, on which stands the convent of *Elijah*, who, as Scripture tells us (1 Kings xix. 8), fled to *Horeb* from the wrath of *Jezebel*. According to a tradition of the Mohammedans, God revealed himself to *Moses* in this part of the mountain, which they call *Horeb* (see, however, note to xxiv. 1). In the west of either mount, and at almost equal distance from either, is the highest point of the chain, which is at present called *Mount St. Catherine*, from some legend about the body of *St. Catherine* being transported by angels to its summit. This whole tract, which consists of enormous granitic rocks, and is intersected and surrounded by steep valleys, is situated on the south-eastern side of the plain *Errahah*. The mount *Horeb* is bordered by two parallel narrow valleys, namely: 1. *Shuab*, in the east (in which stands "the convent of Mount *Sinai*," founded by the emperor *Justinian*, 527 A. C., dedicated to the transfiguration of Christ, 28½ German miles south-east of *Suez*); and, 2. *El-Ledsha* in the west (in which is the convent *El-Erbain*, i. e. of the forty martyrs). The *Horeb* rises to a height of 1200 to 1500 feet above the plain of *Errahah*, whilst the elevation of Mount *Sinai* above the sea amounts, according to *Rueppell*, to 7,035 Parisian feet. The *Catherine*-mountain, which lies beyond the valley *El-Ledsha*, and is, according to the last-mentioned authority, 8,063 feet high, allows alone a free and extensive view over almost all parts of the peninsula, whilst, from the *Dshebel Musa*, the prospect is, in all directions, limited and obstructed. The top of the latter is a little plain of about 80 feet in diameter, on which, now, a small church stands, the chief attraction of the pious pilgrims. Although built of solid granite, it is now almost entirely dilapidated, owing to the incessant attempts of the Arabians to destroy it. About 30 feet from this chapel, on a somewhat lower plain, stands a poor little mosque, which is also held in high honour by the Moslems. It is much frequented by the *Bedouins*, who sacrifice here sheep in honour of *Moses*, offering vows to him, and imploring him to intercede with God in their favour. They celebrate a regular festival every year, for which they assemble in large numbers, and offer abundant sacrifices. The Arabians believe that the tablets of the Law are hidden under the floor of this church, and have, therefore, in the hope of finding them, instituted excavations in every direction. *Burckhardt*, one of the most accurate and conscientious of modern travellers, thus describes this region (ii. 971): "The upper nucleus of *Sinai*, composed almost entirely of granite, forms a rocky wilderness of an irregular circular shape, intersected by many narrow valleys, and from thirty to forty miles in diameter. It contains the highest mountains of the peninsula, whose shaggy and pointed peaks, and steep and shattered sides, render it clearly distinguishable from all the rest of the country in view. It is upon this highest region of the peninsula that the fertile valleys are found which produce fruit-trees; they are principally to the west and south-west of the convent, at three or four hours' distance. Water, too, is always found in plenty in this district, on which account it is the place of refuge of all the *Bedouins* when the low country is parched up;" but the mountain itself is usually dry, "because no rain falls upon it, and it is, therefore, called *the mountain of dryness*" (הר הרב *Ebn Ezra*). The whole group of mountains, except the highest points of Mount *Catherine*, is distinguished by a luxurious fertility: at the sides of the mountains are the most superior pasture-grounds, and in the valleys grow olive—and other fruit-trees—reason enough, why *Moses*, in our text, led his flock just to this region so far southwards.—These remarkable and deeply-interesting localities, connected as they are with the most

sacred associations, have but recently been more carefully investigated by modern travellers and geographers, of whom the more important authors are: Büsching (Geography of Asia, p. 600, *et seq.*); Niebuhr (Travels, i. p. 247, *et seq.*); Volney (Travels, ii. p. 250); Burckhardt (Travels, ii. p. 872, *et seq.*); Rüppell (Abyssinia, i. p. 117, *et seq.*); Robinson (Travels, i. p. 144, *et seq.*); Wellsted (Travels, ii. p. 69, *et seq.*); St. Olin (Journal of the German Oriental Society, ii. p. 315, *et seq.*); Russegger (Travels, iii. p. 200, who has especially directed his attention to the geological character of these regions).

CHAPTER IV.

SUMMARY.—Moses, who fears the disbelief of the Israelites, receives from God, as a verification of his mission, three signs, which he should perform before them, and after which they would confide in him: 1. the transmutation of his staff into a serpent, and of the serpent again into the staff; 2. the leprosy and cure of his hand; and, 3. the change of water from the Nile into blood. But Moses, after having, from modesty and diffidence, to the divine dissatisfaction, repeatedly declined the high and honourable charge, is promised the assistance of his brother Aaron as his interpreter, whilst he himself, inspired by God, would dictate to him the thoughts to be impressed upon Pharaoh and the Israelites. He then asks and obtains from his father-in-law, Jethro, leave to return to Egypt with his wife Zipporah and his two children, one of whom, Eliezer, had been recently born; and after having received renewed assurances of the success of his mission, he undertakes the journey, in the course of which he is threatened with imminent danger of death, which is, however, averted by Eliezer's immediate circumcision, hitherto blameably neglected. After this accident, Zipporah, as well as her two children, returned probably to Jethro. Aaron proceeds, on the command of God, from Egypt to meet his brother, and he joined him at the Mount Horeb; both return to Egypt; they summon the elders and the people of Israel, perform the three wonders before them, and find perfect belief. The people adore and thank God for the mercy now bestowed on them, and for the redemption so reliably guaranteed to them.

AND Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice: for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared to thee.

1. *But, behold, they will not believe me.* Saadiah renders freely, "*perhaps they will not believe me*"; all the others translate, *behold*.—This objection of Moses, which he pronounces with such peremptoriness, has its source not only in his modesty and want of self-assurance (iii. 11), but in his thorough knowledge of the character and condition of his Hebrew brethren, who, degraded and hardened by oppressive labours, and mostly alienated from the belief of their ancestors, were not likely to listen to his promises, and the cheerful hopes proclaimed to them; the less so, as the immediate effect of the measures of

Moses was not an alleviation, but an aggravation of their labours.—Moses received for himself but one sign, to be realised in a *future* time (iii. 12); the people, more obdurate and disbelieving than Moses, requires two or three obvious signs for its encouragement and interest. Numerous were the idolatrous customs into which the Israelites had fallen in Egypt, and so deep root had these abominations taken in the mass of the people, that even so late a prophet as Ezekiel felt the necessity of adverting to them with indignation. See Ezek. xx. 7, 8; xxiii. 3. Comp. Josh. xxiv. 14. *Nor hearken to my voice.* In iii. 18, God assures Moses that the

2. And the Lord said to him, What *is* that in thy hand? And he said, A ¹staff. 3. And He said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses fled from before it. 4. And the Lord said to Moses, Put forth thy hand, and seize it by its tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand. 5. That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Rod.

Israelites will listen to his voice, and that the elders will accompany him to Pharaoh, to ask his permission for their departure. But as God added, that Pharaoh would not grant their request, Moses apprehended that the Israelites might doubt his mission and reproach him: "The Lord God of our ancestors has not appeared to thee," and therefore he justly desired to be furnished with some convincing proofs of his divine charge which God readily granted him. Abarbanel reconciles our text with iii. 18, by the supposition, that the Israelites perhaps believed in the existence of an eternal and immutable being, whilst they might question the mission of Moses.

2. *A staff* (not rod, as the Engl. version has; similarly Sept. *πάβδος*, Vulg. *Virga*), upon which Moses as a man of advanced age leaned, and which he therefore constantly carried with him. It was not a shepherd's staff, because it is improbable that Moses appeared before Pharaoh as a herdsman, a class so detested in Egypt. The question of God: "what is that in thy hand?" is merely an introduction to the description of the miracle, which the following verse contains, as Rashi justly observes. According to the existing monuments, Egyptian gentlemen used generally, when walking from home, sticks from three to six feet long, either surmounted with a knob, imitating a flower, or with the more usual peg projecting from one side. One of those, which have been found at Thebes, is of

cherry wood; but they were usually of acacia. Hard wood was preferred, as frequently the name of the owner was written on them (comp. Num. xvii. 2). Moreover, every Egyptian sage carried his staff (see vii. 12. Comp. *Wilkinson*, *Manners* iii. p. 386, 387). In the convent of Mount Sinai (see *supra* p. 47), even now the monks sell wood of a shrub (*Coluthea Haleppica*), which is suitable for such sticks, and is, not improbably, believed to be the wood of which the miraculous staff of Moses was made. We may add, that according to Jewish tradition, the staff of Moses was, together with nine other objects, made by God towards the close of the sixth day of the creation (see *Ethics of the Fathers*, v. 9). "From the story of Moses' rod, the heathens have invented the fables of the *thyrsus* of Bacchus, and the *caduceus* of Mercury" (!) observes Clarke. Here again is the Hebrew word alone sufficient to overthrow the artificial Mosaic-pagan conjecture, for neither the *thyrsus* nor the *caduceus* were used to *lean upon*. See note on ii. 5. There are still too many authors and critics who consider paganism as nothing but a degenerated Mosaism.

4. The ancient Egyptians were familiar with an art of taming serpents, which has been preserved to our time. Those who are practised in it keep off every attack of the serpents, which, on their command, even stretch themselves out stiff and hard like a stick. In granting this extraordinary gift to Moses, God

appeared to thee. 6. And the Lord said furthermore to him, Put now thy hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand *was* leprous as snow. 7. And He said, Put thy hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and ¹took it out from his bosom; and behold, it was turned again as his *other* flesh. 8. And it will come to pass, if they will not believe thee, nor

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Plucked.

intended to manifest, that he was thereby, by divine assistance, raised above all common magic feats. See note to vii. 12.

6. *Behold, his hand was leprous as snow*, elliptically instead of, "his hand became white with leprosy, like the whiteness of snow." Leprosy, that fearful epidemic, which rages with uncommon violence in Egypt (*Désér. de l' Egypte*, xiii. 159, *et seq.*), and in the south of Asia, manifests itself in four different species, (*Celsus*, de Re Medic. v. 28). Our text alludes to the white leprosy, (*Barras*, *λεύκη*), which having once been most prevalent among the Hebrews, is called in medical phraseology *lepra Moisaica*; and in this circumstance originated the fable of several ancient and even modern historians, that the Israelites were expelled from Egypt on account of their being infested with that disease (see Introduction, § 3). We subjoin a brief description of this foul disorder, to which we shall have more than once occasion to refer in the course of our work. It begins with mealy crusts and scurfy scabs, originally not larger than a pin's point, a little depressed in the skin (*Lev.* xiii. 3, 30), and covered with white hairs (*Lev.* xiii. 3, 20). Those spots rapidly spread (*Lev.* xiii. 8), and produce wild flesh (*xiii.* 10, 14). The leprous symptoms appear most frequently on the hairy parts of the body (*xiii.* 29, *et seq.*); and also on members which have once been ulcerously affected (*xiii.* 18, *et seq.*). When the leprosy has gained ground, the whole skin appears glossy white at the

forehead, nose, etc., tuberculated, thickened, dry like leather, but smooth; sometimes it bursts, and ulcers become visible. The nails of the hands and feet fall off, the eyelids bend backwards, the hair covers itself with a fetid rind, or goes off entirely (*Lev.* xiii. 42). All external senses are weakened; the eyes lose their brightness, become very sensitive, and are constantly blearing; from the nostrils runs a fluid phlegm. In some cases the disease heals from itself, the leprous matter breaking forth suddenly and violently, and covering the patient from top to toe with white ulcerations (*Lev.* xiii. 12, *et seq.*).

7. *And, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh*. This miracle was the more surprising as the white leprosy, when fully developed, is scarcely in any case perfectly curable. ("Leuce—*λεύκη*—quem occupavit non facile dimittit; vix unquam sanescit ac si quid ei vitio demptum est, tamen non ex toto sanus color redditur." *Celsus*, *loc. cit.*).

8. *If they will not believe thee*. Although God knows before, whether they will believe or not, the text intimates, that if a *part* of the Israelites should not be convinced by the first miracle, the *whole people* would believe in Moses after the second sign. And similarly explains Ebn Ezra, the first words of the following verse.—*Neither hearken to the voice of the first sign*, i. e., to the voice or speech confirmed by the first sign or miracle (see Proverbs xviii. 21: "life and death are in the hand—power—of the tongue"). Compare Psalm cv. 27,

hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign. 9. And it will come to pass, if they will also not believe these two signs, nor hearken to thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river [Nile], and pour *it* upon the dry *land*, and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry *land*. 10. And Moses said to the Lord, ²I beseech Thee, my Lord, I *am* not a man of

² *Engl. Vers.*—O my Lord.

where Moses and Aaron are said to have performed before the Egyptians "the words of God's signs." Salomon and Arnheim understand erroneously: "to the *fame* or *report* of the first sign." The *latter sign* has here not superlative meaning, but is more like the second part of an antithesis, "the other or the latter," as in Gen. xxxiii. 2; Deut. xxiv. 3.

9. *Thou shalt take of the water of the river*, etc. Ebn Ezra observes: "This is a part of the first of the ten plagues which were to be inflicted upon the Egyptians." However, it was merely a *sign* to convince them of the omnipotence of the God of Israel, and of his superiority over their deities; and Rashi remarks properly: "This sign was a hint, that the Egyptians would, by the first plague, be chastised for their idolatrous veneration of the fertilizing Nile, which would be ominously converted into blood." Josephus (*Antiq. II. xii. 3*) materially modifies this sign by an apparently slight alteration, for he relates: Moses saw the surface of the water assume the appearance of blood (*ὁρᾷ τὴν ὕδωρ αἱματώδη γενομένην*), whilst our text asserts that the water was *converted into blood*. The same author, however, follows the sacred text more faithfully in the delineation of the first plague, describing it thus: "The Nile flowed, at the command of God, in waves of blood, so that the Egyptians had no water to drink, possessing no other springs. Nor was the water only of the colour of blood, but those who tasted it felt great pains and bitter

torments." The admirers of ingenious allegorical interpretation will find in Abarbanel different and very interesting symbolical expositions of the three signs, which he applies to Pharaoh (serpent), the children of Israel (who contaminate themselves as soon as they leave their own country), and the Egyptians (worshippers of the Nile); and happily he adapts them to the words of the text (iv. 11, 16).

10. *I am not a man of words*, which does not only signify "I am not an *eloquent* man" (as Mendelssohn and the English Version translate), but, also, "one to whom the enunciation of the words is difficult, owing to defects in the organs of speech," synonymous with the phrase: "of uncircumcised lips," compare vi. 12; however, the former explanation is more rational, and seems to be confirmed by ver. 12. The Septuagint translates, indistinctly: "I am not capable or fit." Clarke, contrary to the Hebrew text: "not intimately acquainted with the Hebrew tongue." According to tradition, Moses was unable to pronounce with facility the labials.—It cannot be denied, that the words of our text: "I am not a man of words, neither since yesterday, nor the day before yesterday, nor since Thou hast spoken to Thy servant," produce a strange impression, since they appear to imply a climax, the last degree of which is not without difficulties, for it seems to indicate that God spoke to Moses longer than two or three days, whilst our context affords us no ground for such supposition, although rabbinical

words, neither heretofore, nor since Thou hast spoken to Thy servant; ¹for I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. 11. And the Lord said to him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh ²dumb, or deaf, or seeing,

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—But.

² *The dumb, etc.*

writers believe that God conversed with Moses during seven successive days, to persuade him to accept the mission. Evidently in order to remove this difficulty, Abarbanel thus explains our verse: "I pray Thee, I am no man of words—and therefore I implored Thee to heal my defect;—but I am not only slow of speech since yesterday, or the day before yesterday, but even this very day, on which Thou hast spoken to me, and displayed before me Thy miracles; and whilst Thou hast convinced me that Thou art powerful to heal leprosy, Thou hast manifestly shown to me that Thou dost not intend to free me from the deficiency of my language, I am still 'slow of speech, and of a slow tongue,' and, therefore, send another messenger, gifted with eloquence, a quality so necessary to persuade a stubborn king, and to encourage a desponding nation." Although we admit, that this interpretation is, in some degree, artificial and complicated, it is not exactly in contradiction to the text, and is certainly the most plausible explanation of our verse hitherto proposed.—*For I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue;* literally, *heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue*, or, as the ancient commentators explain: "he had too much flesh on his lips and his tongue, which made the organs of speech heavy; he is, therefore, frequently called a man of uncircumcised lips" (vi. 12). The Septuagint and Vulgate translate: "I am of a stammering language and a heavy tongue." Targum Onkelos "I am of heavy speech, and stammering tongue." All these translations have a certain similarity, and are, in fact, almost identical; but we cannot find any foundation for the interpretation of others, who (like Rashbam) explain: "I am not well versed in the language of the Egyptians; I have forgotten it, for

as a young man I fled from Egypt, and am now an octogenarian." The passage in Ezekiel (iii. 5), which Rashbam quotes, has no resemblance to our text, and the words, "slow of speech, and of a slow tongue," cannot possibly be understood of an individual language, but refer, in general, to the power of expression in which Moses was deficient.—It might, certainly, be asked, with propriety, why Moses, who was singled out by Providence as the great medium for bringing the wisdom of heaven down to the earth, for ever substituting divine truth instead of human error, and who was gifted with such uncommon perfection of the mind and intellect, was denied the power of eloquence, apparently so indispensable for his extraordinary vocation. But it was an act of the sublime wisdom of the Almighty to withhold from Moses just the gift of persuasion, lest it should appear that he owed the triumph over the obstinacy of Pharaoh and the disbelief of the Israelites, not to the miracles of God and the intrinsic worth of the Law, but to the artifices and subtleties of oratory, which too often procure, even to fallacies and sophisms, an ephemeral victory. It was wisely designed that the power of God should the more gloriously shine through a humble and imperfect instrument. This is a remarkable and deeply interesting difference between the legislator of Israel and the founders of almost all other religions, to whom, uniformly, no quality is ascribed in a higher degree than the gift of eloquence.

11. *Who hath made man's mouth?* which Targum Jonathan renders freely: "who hath given speech in the mouth of the first man?" The antithesis to this is: *or who maketh dumb?* A similar contrast has been found in the adjectives *seeing* and *blind*, so that *deaf* alone seems to be without a corresponding ad-

or blind? ³Do not I, the Lord? 12. Now therefore go, and I shall be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. 13. And he said, I beseech Thee, my Lord, send, I pray Thee, by the hand of *him whom* Thou wilt

³ *Engl. Vers.*—Have.

jective. But our verse has a general emphatical or poetical character, describing God as the Creator of man, and the omnipotent Author of all his gifts and defects, which latter He is able to cure, if He thinks it expedient, and mentioning the three principal and most tender senses, that of speech, hearing and sight, by which man resembles God most, or approaches to His perfection. From the same point of view the attempt of applying the qualities here enumerated to *individual* cases or persons, appears to us inadmissible, however interesting such *lusus ingenii* might in themselves be. Thus refers Abarbanel the gift of *speech* to Aaron, who was the *mouth* of his brother; the dumbness to Moses; the deafness to Pharaoh, who did not listen to the requests of God's messenger; and the blindness to the Chartumim of Egypt, who did not see the light of truth. Another less happy symbolisation of our verse is given by Rashi in a quotation from the Rabbins.—The Midrash, and "The Chronicles of Moses," relate a story of a miraculous deliverance of Moses from imminent danger of death in his infancy, when he had, by chance, in his childish play, grasped at the crown on Pharaoh's head, so that it fell down and broke into fragments. The king, considering this circumstance a fatal omen, ordered the boy to be instantly killed, when, on the advice of Jethro, in order to prove that the child was still without discernment, two basins, one filled with gold, the other with burning coals, were placed before Moses, who, by the invisible interference of an angel, did not choose the dazzling gold, for which he had already stretched out his hand, but a burning coal, with which he touched his lips; and thus he became "slow of speech, and of a slow tongue," and especially

unable to pronounce the labials. "And because this defect of Moses," says Nachmanides, "was the consequence of a miracle, God did not wish to remove it."

12. *I shall be with thy mouth*; which phrase, rather obscure in itself, is, according to a frequent Hebrew idiom, more distinctly explained by a succeeding phrase connected with the former by the conjunction *and*, which has, in such cases, almost the meaning of *namely*: "I shall teach thee what thou shalt say." The explanation, therefore, of Rambam, Abarbanel, and Mendelssohn, that God promised to Moses, that he would give into his mouth such words only, as would be easy for him to pronounce, is both unnecessary and trifling. The Septuagint renders: "I shall open thy mouth," which is too free and indistinct; the Vulgate has: "I shall be in thy mouth," (*ego ero in ore tuo*), which is still more unintelligible.

13. *Send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send.* Simple as these words are, and clear as their meaning is: "Send another messenger to Pharaoh and the Israelites, better qualified than myself," they have much engaged the ingenuity of interpreters. The nearest to the words and sense of the text is Targum Onkelos: "Send by the hand of a man, who is fit or worthy to be sent." More paraphratical, and connecting a later idea with our plain words, is the allegorical rendering of Targum Jonathan: "Send this message through Phinehas [who is identical with Elijah the prophet] whom Thou wilt send at the end of all days." Less founded still in the words of our text is the explanation of Rashi: "By the hand of him, whom Thou usest to send, and this is Aaron," which interpretation leans, no doubt, besides a

send. 14. And the anger of the Lord glowed against Moses, and He said, ¹Do I not know Aaron the Levite thy brother, that he can speak well? And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. 15. And thou shalt speak to

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he, etc.

certain tradition, on the circumstance, that God spoke to Aaron already in Egypt before the return of Moses (ver. 27). And equally in the sphere of a free application lies the other supposition of Rashi and Ebn Ezra (which is adopted and more copiously developed by Abarbanel): "Send to Pharaoh him whom Thou wilt ultimately send to conquer and possess the land of promise"; for Moses inferred from the words of God (iii, 10), which do not include any promise to enter Canaan, that he was only destined to break the contumacy of Pharaoh, and to lead the Israelites from Egypt. "Besides, Moses felt that Aaron, who was superior to himself in age and eloquence, had a higher claim to the honour of this divine charge, and that the heart of his brother would be estranged from him if he accepted the commission" (*Ebn Ezra*). Not less objectionable are the two other explanations offered by Abarbanel, which distort still more our simple and clear text. The modern translations express the *sense* correctly, although some of them are not free from inaccuracy in the rendering of the *words*.

14. *And the anger of the Lord glowed against Moses*, in consequence of his obstinate hesitation in accepting the glorious charge, which God intended to entrust to him. Maimonides (*Moreh Neb. i. 36*) observes, that the terms of wrath or anger in connection with God, are in the Scriptures exclusively used with reference to idolatry, and Moses, by evading the command of God, abetted the idolatry of the Israelites in Egypt, from which his mission was intended to free them (see our notes on xx. 4—6).—*The Levite*. This word is neither used here in anticipation of the future offices of

the descendants of Aaron, nor is it used to distinguish the brother of Moses from others also bearing the name Aaron; nor does it show, that it was originally intended by God to endow Aaron only with the functions of a Levite, and Moses with those of the High Priest, but that the latter forfeited this distinction by his blamable reluctance in executing the command of God; nor does it intimate that Aaron had gained great reputation in Egypt under the name of *the Levite*; all which opinions have been advanced by different ancient and modern commentators; but it indicates merely the *tribe*, to which Aaron belonged in common with Moses, and is simply descriptive, like the preceding word, *thy brother*. A similar minute accuracy in designating a well-known individual is, for instance, found in Gen. xxii. 1: "Take thy son, thy only one, whom thou lovest, Isaac."—*And he will be glad in his heart*, that is, he will be heartily glad; he will rejoice with all his heart. The Septuag. takes *heart* here as a mere pronoun, and renders *ἐν ἑαυτῷ*.—The fear, which might have arisen in the mind of Moses that Aaron, more fit for the honorable commission, both by his age and his distinguished fecundity, would look with envy and jealousy at the partiality displayed towards himself, this apprehension was at once dissipated by the assurance of God, which shows the modesty and moral rectitude of Aaron; "and, as a reward for these rare virtues of the heart, Aaron obtained the dignity of High Priest, and the ornament of the *breastplate*, which is borne on the heart" (*Rashi, Abarbanel*).

15. The sense of the words, *and put the words into his mouth*, are more dis-

him, and put ²the words into his mouth: and I shall be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and shall teach you what you shall do. 16. And he shall speak for thee to the people, and he shall indeed be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God. 17. And thou shalt take this staff into thy hand, wherewith thou

² *Engl. Vers.—Words.*

tinctly explained in the next verse.—*And I shall be with thy mouth.* Nachmanides makes the following sagacious, but artificial combination: "God promised Moses to direct his words before Pharaoh, as He undertook to assist Aaron in his addresses to the *people* (see ver. 16); but when Moses, at the close of his interlocation with God, still exclaimed: 'Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken to my words?' God confided the harangues before Pharaoh also to Aaron" (vii. 1). But in fact, no distinction is made in the sacred text between the appearance of Moses before Pharaoh and before the people (see iii. 10, 11).—*And I shall be with his mouth*, that the words which he—inspired by thee—will pronounce, may win the ears of his hearers, enter into their hearts, and carry conviction to their minds.

16. *He shall indeed be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.* Onkelos already, whom Rashi and Rashbam follow, expresses the sense of these words almost correctly: "He shall be to thee as an interpreter or agent, and thou shalt be to him as a teacher or master." Targum Jonathan offers the same version, but with the addition: "seeking information from the Lord." The translations of the Septuagint and of the Vulgate are indistinct, concealing rather than disclosing the sense. However, the general meaning is unmistakeable: Aaron shall adorn with elegance and eloquence of expression the ideas which Moses, inspired by God, will request him to represent to the people and to Pharaoh. See especially vii. 1, *et seq.* And in this sense says Ebn Ezra: It was no derogation for Moses to be sent to Pharaoh accompanied by Aaron; on the contrary,

a distinction; for Aaron resembled only the mouth, which expresses the reflections of the soul, which is invisible, like the incorporeal angels; thus Moses stood to Aaron in the category of an angel; and this is the meaning of the words: "thou shalt be to him as a God." Abarbanel is on this point also the most explicit and clear: "God said to Moses: 'The divine inspiration will descend upon thee without any medium or mediator, and thou shalt transfer it upon Aaron; the whole honour of the mission will therefore be thy own; and Aaron will only be like thy interpreter; compared with him, thou wilt be like a God; and he will be at thy side like a prophet, who pronounces that which God commands him.'"

17. *And this staff*, to which the Sept. freely adds: "which had been converted into a serpent," *wherewith thou shalt do the signs*, viz., which I shall command thee to do. As Moses had hitherto performed but *one* miracle with the staff, Nachmanides observes: "That when God spoke to Moses (iii. 20) of all the wonders which He would do in Egypt, He communicated them to him individually, and that He thus could here allude to the signs which Moses would do with the staff. They were—to convert it into a serpent before the Israelites and before Pharaoh, to smite with it the Nile, to call forth the frogs, to bring over the land the gnats, to make the hail descend, to cover the country with the locusts, and to produce darkness." From a similar reason, no doubt, the English Version does not translate the definite article in the Hebrew words "wherewith thou shalt do signs." But the ellipsis above stated, is simple and natural; and the text stands neither in need of an alteration, nor of

shalt do ¹the signs. 18. And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father-in-law, and said, Let me go, I pray thee, and return to my brethren, who *are* in Egypt, and see whether they are yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace. 19. And the Lord said to Moses

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Signs.

artificial explanations. Abarbanel finds in the staff of Moses, which God here expressly and distinctly commands him always to bear in his hand, six different symbols, very happily substantiating them with Scriptural sentences. It represents: 1. The support of, and confidence in God; 2. The rule and sovereignty of Moses; 3. The humiliation and thralldom of the Israelites; 4. The gathering of the scattered members of the nation like a shepherd gathers his flock; 5. The chastisement to be inflicted upon the refractory and disobedient king; and 6. Justice and equity in all judicial decisions.

18. *And said, Let me return to my brethren,* that is, *my family*; as he could not suppose, that all the *Israelites* had died out during his sojourn in Midian. Moses did not communicate to Jethro the real purport and aim of his departure; for if he was afraid that even his own co-religionists would not easily believe him and trust in his mission, how much less could he expect to escape the reproach of a deceived enthusiast, from one who was no direct descendant of their patriarchs, and had no knowledge of the revelations which they had received, and of the promises which they cherished as a dear and sacred pledge. Abarbanel sees in the concluding words, *go in peace*, more than a simple expression of farewell wishes; namely, a warning to take care, lest similar accidents befall him now in Egypt, as those with which he usually met when he went out to see his brethren (see ii. 11); and therefore God assured him, as the following verse relates, that all his enemies were dead.

19. *And the Lord said to Moses in Midian,* etc. As the communication here made

to Moses is so important for his return to Egypt, that it might be considered as the first condition, ancient commentators believe that God must have made it to him already long since, recurring here to the often applied principle: "the chronological order of events is not strictly adhered to in the holy writ," and translating: "God *had already said to Moses.*" But we have nowhere seen that the consideration of personal danger had any influence upon the resolutions of Moses, either in his past or future conduct, or in the present communion with God (see our note on iii. 11). From the same reason the opinion of others must be rejected, who believe that Moses, even after having taken leave from his father-in-law, hesitated anew, pretending that he was afraid of the persecutions of his enemies in Egypt: on which point, therefore, God found it necessary to calm and to satisfy him. Such idea is not in the remotest sense hinted at in our text.—*For all the men are dead who sought thy life*, namely, the relatives of the Egyptian whom he killed, who had persecuted him for this deed. According to the Egyptian law, exiles were allowed to return to their homes at the death of the Pharaoh under whom they had been expelled. It has been observed above (on ii. 13), that tradition names Dathan and Abiram as "the two Hebrews contending together," and that these were naturally also inimical to Moses, whom they reproached with an arrogant assumption of authority; the same tradition must, therefore, include them here also among the deceased enemies of Moses; but as we find them living long after this period, recourse has been taken to the very questionable device, that they were im-

in Midian, Go, return to Egypt, for all the men are dead who sought thy life. 20. And Moses took his wife and his sons, and ²made them ride upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the staff of God into his hand. 21. And the Lord said to Moses, When

² *Engl. Vers.—Set.*

poverished, "and that a poor man is like to a dead one." It is sufficient to have mentioned this opinion.

20. *And Moses took his wife and his sons.* In ii. 22, we read only of the birth of *one* son of Moses and Zipporah, namely Gershom; and several interpreters have, therefore, considered the plural, *his sons*, as an inaccuracy of expression as it sometimes occurs, for instance, Num. xxvi. 8: And the sons of Pallu, Eliab (Gen. xxxvii. 35; xli. 7, 23). There is, however, no occasion for such conjecture, and nothing prevents us from supposing that the second son of Moses, Eliezer, was born immediately before his departure from Midian, so that he was not yet circumcised (ver. 25). — *And he made them ride upon the ass.* It is not impossible that Zipporah, with her new born child in her arms, rode together with her son Gershom on the same animal; it is, therefore, unnecessary to take here *ass* as the name of the species, signifying several asses (as Gen. xxxii. 6, Sept. ἐπὶ τὰ ὑποζύγια). It is, however, not inadmissible to translate: "he made them ride each upon his ass." Some ancient commentators found it derogatory to the dignity of the Law-giver, that his wife and children rode on an *ass*. This animal, however, is of a far superior quality in Arabia and Egypt than in the northern countries. It is livelier, quicker, more stately, courageous and robust. In Persia a good ass is often valued at a hundred pounds sterling. The Arabian ass goes considerably quicker than a camel; for whilst the former makes, in an hour, 3½ English miles, the latter goes only 2¾ miles. It is very susceptible to dampness of the atmosphere; and is in the rainy seasons much

less spirited and quick-footed; and to this circumstance the fact is, perhaps, to be traced, that the Oriental asses are so remarkably superior to those in our countries; and as in Egypt rain belongs to the rare phenomena, the asses there have a peculiar excellence. The ass was, and is still, much valued in the East; and whilst it is in the modern languages used as an insult and a by-word, it is perfectly the contrary in Oriental phraseology (see Gen. xlix. 14; Iliad. xi. 588, *et seq.*). On account of its safe step, it was, in mountainous regions, the only riding animal in the times before Solomon, even for females and wealthy individuals (1 Kings ii. 40). — *And he returned to the land of Egypt*, with his wife and children, whom he, however, most probably sent back to Midian after the event related in ver. 24—26, as appears from xviii. 2—6; for, as Ebn Ezra remarks, it would not have been wise for Moses to take his family to Egypt, from whence he intended to lead forth all the Israelites. Abarbanel, however, observes that Moses took his wife and children with him to Egypt, in order to convince the Israelites of his unlimited confidence in the promise and assistance of God; for if he had feared the least danger, he would not have exposed his family to it by bringing them to Egypt. But with this opinion it would be difficult to understand the beginning of the 18th chapter, where the wife and children of Moses are said to have been with Jethro, "after Moses had sent them back." — *The staff of God* is the staff with which Moses performed the miracles before the Lord (see ver. 17). The Sept. translates inaccurately, "the staff which he had received from God" τὴν ῥάβδον τὴν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ (see ver. 2). Our verse

thou goest to return to Egypt, 'consider well all the wonders, which I shall have put into thy hand; and thou

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—See, that thou do all these wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put into thy hand.

is closely connected with ver. 24, *et seq.* With great propriety the inspired author introduces, on the momentous point of the departure from Midian, once more a concise summary of the whole end and course of the great mission; and this insertion is therefore so far from interrupting the context that it is a peculiar beauty of composition.

21. We have translated literally with the Septuagint, "*see or consider well all the wonders,*" etc. The English Version (as also the Vulgate, Luther, and De Wette) render more the sense than the words: "*see that thou do all those wonders.*"—*Which I shall have put into thy hand.* As Moses was not only to perform the three signs above mentioned (ver. 2—9), but also all the wonders not yet communicated to him, it would be improper to translate, as the English Version does: *Do before Pharaoh the wonders which I have put into thy hand.* We are therefore compelled to take the verb here as a *futurum exactum*, "at the time when it will be necessary to perform the wonders before Pharaoh, I shall have put them into thy hand"; or as a simple future: "I shall put them," etc.—*But I shall harden his heart and he will not let the people go.* It is well known, that this and the similar passages, which appear to make God the author and originator of sin and refractoriness, have, from the earliest times, caused violent attacks, which theologians and philosophers have always found necessary to refute anew. We can hardly agree with those who assert, that Pharaoh forfeited, by the cruelty which he perpetrated against the Hebrews, every claim or right to forgiveness, and that he therefore fell a prey to divine revenge: which opinion certainly disregards the all-merciful Father of mankind, who is "good and just, and shows the right way to the sinner" (Ps. xxv. 9). However, the same idea

is implied in Whiston's remark (on *Josephus*, Antiq. VII. ix. 6): "This reflection of Josephus, that God brought to nought the dangerous counsel of Ahithophel, and directly infatuated wicked Absalom to reject it (which infatuation is what the Scripture styles the judicial hardening the hearts, and blinding the eyes of men, who by their former voluntary wickedness have justly deserved to be destroyed, and are thereby brought to destruction), is a very just one, and in him not unfrequent. Nor does Josephus ever puzzle himself, or perplex his readers, with subtle hypotheses as to the manner of such judicial infatuations by God, while the justice of them is generally so obvious." But with such apodictic sentences we gain nothing, and the solution of that highly important and interesting problem, which involves the momentous question about predestination and free will, is thereby in no manner promoted. We pass by such opinions as that of Hales (*Chron.* II. i. 194), who infers from Matthew xii. 43, that "when God is said to harden Pharaoh's heart, it was in reality hardened by diabolical influence or demoniacal possession"; for such views, far from removing the difficulty, render it still more obscure and intricate, by introducing notions absolutely foreign to the Pentateuch. It is a remarkable circumstance, that the expression, "God hardened Pharaoh's heart" recurs seven times (Exodus iv. 21; vii. 3; ix. 12; x. 1, 20, 27; xi. 10), and that the phrase, "Pharaoh himself hardened his heart," is as often repeated (Exod. vii. 13, 22; viii. 11, 15, 28; ix. 7, 34); further, that the first and last time, when similar expressions are used, God is represented as the source of the obstinacy of Pharaoh, so that the contumacy of the king seems to be only the *effect* of the intention of God to obdurate his mind. For the explanation of these momentous questions, which belong more to the phi-

shalt do them before Pharaoh: but I shall harden his heart, and he will not let the people go. 22. And thou shalt say to Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my

losophy of religion than to a Biblical commentary, we refer to our "Lecture on Predestination and Free Will," in which we have endeavoured to elucidate this difficult subject. In general, we observe:

1. The difference between the *omniscience* of God and His *predestination* if always properly regarded, will remove, in a great measure, the obscurity of such passages, so that they amount to the sense of the words (iii. 19): "And I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go, even not by a mighty hand"—in which words no critic will find any objectionable idea.

2. As the external, often accidental, *occasion* of an event is mostly more obvious, even to the reflecting mind, than its primary cause or its true (often hidden) originator, it has become a linguistic peculiarity in most ancient, especially the Semitic, languages, to use indiscriminately the former instead of the latter, so that the phrase, "I shall harden the heart of Pharaoh" means: I know that I shall be the *cause* of Pharaoh's obstinacy; my commandments and wonders will be an *occasion*, an *inducement* to an increasing obduration of his heart. And the compassionate leniency of God, who, instead of crushing the haughtiness of the refractory king with one powerful blow, first tried to reform him by various less awful punishments, and who generally announced the time of the occurrence of the plagues by the words, "Behold I shall afflict to-morrow," in order to grant him time for reflection and repentance; this clemency on the part of God increased Pharaoh's refractoriness; it was to him a *cause* of prolonged and renewed resistance.

3. The opinion of Luther and his followers, that God *allows* the sin of man, without causing it, not only not removes the difficulty, but adds new objections to our problem. If God sees the wicked man medi-

tate pernicious schemes, which He might by His mere will destroy, and yet permits the nefarious deeds to be executed, even the pious heart might doubt of the divine interference in the affairs of man, and lose the firm belief in the strict justice of God. Thus the world would in reality become a prey to chance, or to the arbitrariness of the impious, who are allowed to carry out without check or control their mischievous plan. But nothing except the unshaken confidence in the direction and *sole* government of God, who reigns supreme over mankind and their fates, can satisfy the religious mind in its reflections on the destinies of individuals and of nations. Every deed, whether good or evil, is a means in the hand of God; however, the evil deed is not converted into a blessing because it happens to have been performed, but because God designed it from the beginning as an instrument of His will and His higher decrees; just as Joseph replied to his brothers: "You intended it as an evil against me, but God intended it as a blessing." The deed of man, and the will of God, go hand in hand; they are contemporary, they are, in fact, identical.

4. The whole spirit of the Pentateuch utterly excludes the idea, that God infatuated Pharaoh, merely in order to punish him; that He first compels man to wickedness, and then calls him to account for it. The origin of sin, as related in the third chapter of Genesis, is alone sufficient to impress upon us the conviction, that free choice and unfettered will are granted to man, to pursue virtue and to shun crime (see Deut. ii. 26). The Mosaic legislation is entirely and exclusively based on the doctrine of retaliation; and the exclamation of Isaiah (iii. 10, 11): "Say ye to the righteous that they shall be blessed, for they shall enjoy the fruits of their actions. Woe to the wicked; for the reward of their hands they shall reap;" this idea

son, *even* my firstborn: 23. And I say to thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refusest to let him go, behold, I shall slay thy son, *even* thy firstborn.

forms the leading principle of the whole Old Testament. Misfortune is the consequence of sin, as virtue is the necessary cause of happiness; and both bliss and misery stand again under the higher supervision of Providence. Therefore, admitting even that phrases like that of our text are obscure, they cannot possibly be used to overthrow a clear fundamental doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, which would, without it, be deprived of their most divine principle.

22. *Israel is my son, even my first-born*, that is, Israel is that nation which knew and adored me the first among all generations of men, and which I have, therefore, more especially taken under the wings of my protection, loving them as a father loves his first-born son, on whom he places his entire hope and pride. It is less appropriate to take, with Rashi, the word *first-born* here in the signification of *greatness*, as in Ps. lxxxix. 28, where David is called so, and where it is explained in the second part of the verse by: "the highest among the kings of the earth."—It may be mentioned, that Moses never, in addressing Pharaoh, either before or after a plague, uses the words here commanded to him, *Israel is my first-born son*, but only, *send my people* (v. 1; vi. 16; vii. 26, etc).

23. *I shall slay thy son, even thy first-born*. Although this menace was pronounced to Pharaoh only before the last plague, God mentions it already here, because it contained the severest and most fearful punishment, and stood in exact correspondence with the obduracy of Pharaoh, who should lose his first-born son because he oppressed the first-born son of God. But Rashi believes that Moses addressed these words to Pharaoh already at his first appearance before him, in order to show, from the beginning, the dreadful judgment of the Almighty which awaited his obstinacy; for "the

loving-kindness of God warns man, in due season, to return from his wickedness."

24. *And it came to pass by the way, in the resting-place for the night*. At present there are, in the East, instead of our inns or hotels, in suitable intervals, in towns, villages, and on the open road, houses which offer shelter during the night, for travellers and their animals, mostly gratuitously; sometimes, also, provisions are sold there for moderate prices (such buildings are called in Arabic, *Mansils*, *Chans*, or *Caravansaries*. But such houses were unknown to the Israelites in the earlier periods; they had a *malen*, which is either a moveable tent temporarily pitched up for the night, or a cavern adapted for the purpose of pernoctation; and it is known that, even at present, travellers use such tents for resting-places during the night in the very vicinity of towns. We have, therefore, rejected the rendering of *malon* by *inn*, as it is given by the English Version; besides, inns were, in the East where the virtue of hospitality is practised with the conscientiousness and cheerfulness of a religious duty, almost superfluous, although there were a few in less populous regions (see Niebuhr, Travels, 46; Robinson, iii. 480, 575; Wellsted, ii. 218).—*The Lord met him, and sought to kill him*. Instead of *God*, Onkelos, the Septuagint, and the Arabic Version, have here *the angel of God*.—Although this, and the two following verses (which belong together) are obscure, and not without difficulties, they are not nearly so unintelligible as the critical zeal of many interpreters has represented them.—1st. The context shows clearly, that the pronouns belonging to the two verbs, *the Lord met him*, and *sought to kill him*, refer, necessarily, to Moses, and not to the child, which has never been mentioned before (the poetical diction in passages

24. And it came to pass by the way, 'in the resting-place over night, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him. 25. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—In the inn.

like Psalm lxxxvii. 1, can decide nothing for the prosaical connections), and which was too innocent to have deserved death. 2nd. It is further clear (from ver. 26), that the reason why the Lord sought to kill Moses, was, his neglect in circumcising his (no doubt new-born) second son, Eliezer (see on ver. 20), a neglect the more culpable in Moses, as circumcision was, hitherto, the only sign of the covenant between God and Israel; and as he, who had been sent to renew that alliance, was, above all others, bound to perform and respect that symbol. Therefore are the opinions of those who find the guilt of Moses in his having taken his family with him into the land of idolatry, or in having occupied himself too much with the worldly comforts for the night, gratuitous conjectures rather than genuine explanations of our text. Even the interpretation of Abarbanel, who observes, that the spirit of prophecy descended upon Moses at the resting-place, but, absorbed as he was, by temporal anxieties, he was unable to receive and apply it, is more specious than real; for it would be difficult to comprehend how the spirit of prophecy "sought to kill Moses." More plausible is the supposition of Ebn Ezra, that Moses fell suddenly into a serious illness, which reminded him of his transgression, and convinced him that he was in danger of death, unless he corrected it without delay. It is unnecessary to mention the various artificial conjectures which this verse has been doomed to call forth.

25. *Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, or stone knife.* In Joshua v. 2, 3, we read that the circumcision of the people was, in the land of Canaan, performed with knives of sharp stones, evidently coinciding with the instrument named 'in' our text. The use of stones for similar purposes, was prevalent in the East, even in times when the application of metal in-

struments of all kinds was long known and universally adopted. According to Ludolf (Descript. of Ethiopia, iii. 1. § 21), the Alnaji, an Ethiopian tribe, used sharpened flints for the circumcision of their children; and they continue this practice most probably to this day. According to Herodotus (ii. 86), the Egyptians opened the bodies, which were to be embalmed, with flint-knives. Pliny (Hist. Nat. xxxv. 12) informs us, that the priests of Cybele used similar instruments for their castration. According to Josephus (Antiq. XIV. iv. 1), the rind of trees which contained balm, was opened with stone knives. Diodorus Siculus (iii. 15) mentions that the Ichthyophagi, on the Arabian Sea, open their fish with sharp flints. The American tribes made battle-axes, knives and daggers, of stone before they knew the application of the metals. And even now those Jewish male children who die before the eighth day from their birth, are circumcised with stone knives. —*And she cut off the foreskin of her son, and put it at his feet, and said, Thou art indeed a bridegroom of blood to me.* We explain these obscure words in the simplest manner, thus: Zipporah circumcised (cut off the foreskin of) her son—for Moses was unable to perform the ceremony on account of his illness, and laid it before the feet of this son, exclaiming, with a mixed feeling of indignation and tenderness, "Although all Hebrew children, from the blood of circumcision, (by which alone they are received into the covenant of the Lord), might justly be called bridegrooms, or sons of blood, thou, Eliezer, deservest indeed (in reality) this name much more, because the neglect of that circumcision had almost caused the death of my husband." It appears to us impossible to refer the pronouns "at his feet," and "thou art indeed," to any other substantive but the son, the only masculine noun in the whole sentence; they cannot apply

the foreskin of her son, and ¹put it at his feet, and said, ²Thou art indeed a bridegroom of blood to me. 26. So He ³desisted from him: then she said, A ⁴bridegroom of blood thou art, because of the circumcision. 27. And the Lord said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mountain of God, and

¹ Engl. Vers. — Cast.

² Surely a bloody husband art thou to me.

³ Let him go.

⁴ A bloody husband.

to Moses (as many suppose), nor, much less, to the *destroying angel*, as the Targumim render. The Hebrew word, which appears here to be used designedly, includes, most happily, the two significations of relative or bridegroom, and

circumcision (compare, in Arabic, حتن any relative on the part of the wife, and

ختان circumcision); and, since the cir-

cumcision was considered as a symbol of the covenant between God and the child, it might, poetically, be compared with a matrimonial alliance. Ebn Ezra observes, that "women call their circumcised children *bridegrooms*," and the child is, even at present, on the day of his circumcision, named among the Israelites "bridegroom of the covenant." We have, therefore, translated, "bridegroom of blood," instead of "bloody husband," which the English Version offers. Targ. Onkelos and Targ. Jonathan express the sense almost correctly; the former renders, "by the blood of circumcision of this one, my husband has been restored to me;" the latter, "and Zipporah said: 'My husband wished to circumcise the child, but his father-in-law prevented him; but now the blood of circumcision will expiate the guilt of my husband.'" The Septuagint offers a remarkable deviation from our text: "the blood of circumcision of my son has ceased," which seems to be based on a quite different reading of the Hebrew text. Gesenius explains the words *put it at his feet* thus: "and she touched the feet of Moses with the blood of the child, which is the rite of expiation." But, 1st. the word *blood* is not before mentioned; and 2nd. as *bridegroom of blood* is referred to

the child, we should have a very singular change in the application of the pronouns (similar are the interpretations of Abulwalid, Kimchi, Spencer, Pococke, Mendelssohn, and others). Of the numberless other explanations, we give only that of Rosenmüller, which is not without some appearance of probability: "Zipporah threw, with a certain indignation, the foreskin before the feet of Moses, and said to him: 'I am compelled to redeem and preserve you by blood, namely, that of my son; for unless I had circumcised him, and thus shed his blood, thy life would have been forfeited.'" (Similarly Glaire). But to this interpretation also applies the objection, that the pronoun in "*his feet*" cannot refer to Moses, who is mentioned neither in this nor in the preceding verse.—The reason why Moses neglected such an important duty as that of the circumcision of his son, has been sought in the supposition that Eliezer was, perhaps, born only a few days before the departure of Moses from Midian; and, not wishing to delay the mission which God had entrusted to him, he took the child with him, intending to perform in Egypt the circumcision, which he feared might be dangerous during the journey. But it is more probable, that Zipporah, adhering to the custom of the Arabians, who, considering the operation perilous and improper in such young infants, circumcise their children only at their thirteenth year, had persuaded Moses to postpone that sacred ceremony.

26. *And He desisted from him*, namely, God desisted from Moses, or, in other words, the illness of the latter ceased; thus Zipporah became perfectly convinced that the danger into which her husband

kissed him. 28. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord ⁵which He had charged him, and all the signs which He had commanded him. 29. And Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of the children of Israel: 30. And Aaron spoke all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses, and did all the signs before the

⁵ *Engl. Vers.*—Who had sent him.

had fallen was occasioned by the neglected circumcision of their child, and she, therefore, exclaimed again in the words: *a bridegroom of blood thou art, because of the circumcision*; which words can grammatically only signify, "thou art a bridegroom of blood, but not so far as to cause the death of my husband, but only as regards the blood of circumcision." Targum Onkelos renders incorrectly: "but for the blood of circumcision of this child, my husband would have incurred a crime of death." Targum Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase freely: "Then began Zipporah hymns of praise, saying: 'How dear is this blood of circumcision, which has rescued my husband from the hand of the destroying angel!'"—We believe that, after the explanation given on this passage (ver. 24—26), its meaning and connection will be intelligible; however, if it should be asked why this event is related in such obscure phraseology, we may advert to the great art of composition displayed in this point also. The whole occurrence is a mysterious act of divine warning and retribution; Moses' illness was a "rod of correction" in the hand of God; he felt and understood the divine chastisement, and was delivered from his imminent danger. Over this event a transparent veil is spread, not to conceal the guilt of Moses, but to allow a larger scope to imagination to represent it to itself in its whole extent.

27. *And he went, and met him in the mountain of God*, that is, Mount Horeb (see our note on iii. 1). Targum Onkelos and Jonathan render here also: "the mountain on which the Lord was revealed." If we compare the relative geographical position of the nomadic

part of Midian (see our note on ii. 15), and of Lower Egypt, of which Goshen was a province, we cannot but see that Moses must, for some purpose not related in our text, have gone again so much southwards as Mount Horeb, perhaps because this was the most appropriate place to meet Aaron, whom he would have missed in the extended pathless desert.—*And he (Aaron) kissed him (Moses)*. Ebn Ezra observes on this verse: "Aaron was not gifted with prophecy, nor was there any occasion for it; for Moses was the messenger despatched to Pharaoh, and he sent Aaron to the Israelites, and Miriam to their wives." Abarbanel, however, finds in the expression, that Moses and Aaron "met at the mountain of God," an allegorical allusion, that the spirit of prophecy had descended on both brothers.

28. *And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord which He had charged him*. The usual translation, *who had sent him*, is languid in the extreme; and makes these words a superfluous addition. But the Hebrew word here applied signifies often: *to*; and is sometimes construed with a double accusative in the signification of *charge somebody with some commission*, for instance, quite similar to our passage in 2 Sam. xi. 22: "and he told David *all things which Joab had charged him*;" see also Isaiah lv. 11. Similarly already the Septuagint and Vulgate.

29. *About the elders of the children of Israel*, see note on iii. 16.

30. *And Aaron spoke all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses*; in harmony with the command of God, who appointed Aaron as the interpreter

eyes of the people. 31. And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had ¹taken regard of the children of Israel, and that He had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed down and prostrated themselves.

¹ *Engl. Vers.* — Visited.

between Moses and the people (see ver. 16); to which tradition adds, that after the death of the latter, Eliezer, the son of Moses, performed the same function.—*And he did the signs before the eyes of the people*, namely the three signs described in verses 2—9. Although the readiness of Aaron to co-operate with Moses, and the sympathy which the exhortations and promises of both excited among the Israelites, strongly prove that the hope of returning to the land of their ancestors, was a lively and dearly-cherished feeling among them, yet the peculiar, enthusiastic character common to all eastern nations, imposed upon Moses the necessity of proving by miracles, that he was indeed the divine delegate; and even more than two thousand years later, Mohammed was compelled to display certain miracles in order to gain the confidence of his superstitious countrymen.

31. *Then they bowed down and prostrated themselves.* Although these verbs are likewise used with reference to *man* (Gen. xxiii. 7), and this kind of homage is, without dis-

inction, rendered to all representatives of God, as kings and prophets; it appears here more in harmony with the context to explain that the Israelites prostrated themselves before *God*, rather than before Moses and Aaron. For Moses was so obviously the direct and immediate messenger of God, that it would have been preposterous to worship the servant, and not the Lord; and so deeply did the people feel the presence of God, that they were, at this moment, full of firm and genuine belief, whilst later, when the manifest instrumentality of Moses was, in some degree, obliterated from their minds, their sceptical disposition displayed itself in all its invidiousness. It is worthy of remark, that “a mere passive consent of the Israelites is all that Moses requires, for which he promises deliverance; he does not insist on any active co-operation on their part; he enjoins neither courage, discipline, enterprise, nor mutual confidence; nothing which might render insurrection formidable, or indicate an organised plan of resistance.”

CHAPTER V.

SUMMARY.—Moses and Aaron proceed to the court of Pharaoh, and request him, in the name of the God of Israel, to allow the Hebrews to celebrate, after a three days' journey into the wilderness, a festival to their God. Pharaoh answers with scorn, that he does not know that God, nor was he willing to obey His commandments. When Moses and Aaron repeated the same demand, the king, in an ebullition of passion, pronounces the edict, that henceforth no straw should be given to the Israelites for the bricks, which they had to make, but that they should seek it themselves, and yet furnish the same amount of bricks as before; for he supposed that the request of Moses and Aaron was only a pretext for gratifying the idleness and rebellious disposition of the Hebrews. As the Israelitish labourers were not able to satisfy the increased demands of the king, the overseers, who were responsible for every deficiency in their work, were severely treated by the Egyptian task-masters; they complained before Pharaoh, who, however, only repeated his former tyrannical edict. In this distressed position they reproached Moses and Aaron with their thoughtless schemes, which had only

tended to bring down new misery upon them. Moses, in grief and despondency, addressed his prayers to the Lord, asking wherefore it was necessary to send him to Pharaoh, if his mission was destined to increase, instead of diminishing, the calamity of His people.

AND afterwards Moses and Aaron ¹came and said to Pharaoh, Thus ²hath the Lord God of Israel said, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to

¹ *Engl. Vers.* — Went in.

² Saith.

1. *And afterwards Moses, etc.* Only after having succeeded in securing the firm confidence of the people, Moses could represent to Pharaoh the request of God, and accompanied by Aaron—but probably not the elders of Israel (see on iii. 18)—he proceeds to the court, where he is not only unknown to the king—who is the *successor* of him whose daughter had adopted and educated him (see ii. 23)—but also to the whole royal household, which during the forty years of his absence from Egypt must have considerably, if not entirely, been changed or remodelled. No doubt Aaron alone addressed Pharaoh (iv. 15, 16), and the plural, *they spoke*, is used because he did so in the name of Moses also; and the assertion that they spoke *both together*, because God had promised Moses: “I shall be with thy mouth and with his [Aaron’s] mouth,” is the more surprising, proceeding as it does from such a rational commentator as Ebn Ezra.—*Thus hath the Lord God of Israel said.* *Jehovah* is here (as in ver. 3) described as the national or peculiar God of Israel or the Hebrews, of whom Pharaoh himself confesses (ver. 2) to be ignorant—a sufficient proof for unbiassed critics, that the Tetragrammaton is neither derived from an Egyptian source, nor, much less, imparted to Moses by Egyptian priests (see note on iii. 14).—*My nation*, i. e., that nation, which knows and worships me, and which I have therefore taken under my special protection and providence (see on iv. 22).—*In the desert.* The Israelites wished to sacrifice to God in the desert, not in Egypt before the eyes of the Egyptians, who would have been stimulated to fanatic fury by witness-

ing the Hebrews killing the animals which were to themselves objects of worship and adoration (see viii. 22). Besides, this request must have appeared the less surprising to the Egyptians, as they also seem to have celebrated religious festivals in the desert. Near Sarabit-el-Khadim, in the wilderness, a locality has been found covered with old Egyptian edifices and monuments, on which the names of Egyptian kings are engraved. It is probable that the Egyptians frequently resorted to this and similar other places, for the celebration of religious festivals.—Which was the residence of Pharaoh is a disputed question, to be decided either in favour of Memphis (in the neighbourhood of Cairo); or—which is far more probable—for Zoan or Tanis, near the mouth of one of the eastern arms of the Nile, in the Delta. If there were no other proof for the latter supposition but the repeated statement, that Moses performed his wonders “in the field of Zoan” (Psalms lxxviii. 12, 43); it would be sufficient to remove every uncertainty. But further, in the passage (Num. xiii. 23): “and Hebron was built seven years before Zoan of Egypt,” the capital is evidently alluded to. Other passages (as Gen. xlv. 10; xlv. 28, 29; Exod. ii. 3, 5), show, that the residence of Pharaoh must have been in the immediate vicinity of the abode of the Israelites of Goshen, which would agree well with Zoan. Osburn (Mon. Hist. ii. 575) believes that the interviews of Moses with Pharaoh took place in “Raamses or Rameses, which was situated on the western border of the Delta, about midway between the Canopic branch of the Nile and the canal of Alexandria.” These words contain two mistakes: 1

me in the desert: 2. And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, whose voice I shall obey to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. 3. And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met us: let us go, we pray thee, a three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice to the Lord our God; lest He fall upon us with

Raamses is not identical with Rameses, the former is the *town*, the latter is the *province*, synonymous with Goshen; and 2. Raamses does not lie on the western, but the eastern border of the Delta; it was not built for a royal residence, but for a fortified store city (see note on i. 11).—The Pharaoh whom Moses addressed, was Amenophis, the sixteenth, or last king of the eighteenth Diospolitanic dynasty (see *Introduction* § 2, iii. 2.)

2. *Who is the Lord*, etc. These words of Pharaoh, who, relying upon the power of his own gods, openly defies the chastisement of all other deities, are the intense and revolting expression of the impotent wantonness of an arbitrary tyrant against an unhappy and oppressed nation, and the sum of his overweening obstinacy, which unavoidably called down upon him and his country the punishment of a justly recompensing Providence. Onkelos renders: "the name of *Jehovah* has not been revealed to me"; and Jonathan, still more significantly corroborating our remarks in the preceding verse, paraphrases thus: "The name of *Jehovah* has not been revealed to me.... I do not find in the book of the angels (deities) the name of *Jehovah* mentioned, and therefore I do not fear him" (see note to iii. 13).—*I know not the Lord*. "Although the Pharaohs of Egypt know God by the name of Elohim (Gen. xli. 38, 39), they were ignorant of the holy designation of the Almighty; they refused therefore to allow the departure of the Israelites, whom they wished to serve *them* alone as their supreme sovereigns, and not their God" (*Ebn Ezra*). Compare about this verse also Cusari iv. 15.

3. *And they said, the God of the Hebrews hath met us*. Moses obviously

answers the spiteful question of Pharaoh: "Who is the Lord"? with the words: "He is the God of the Hebrews, whom you should know, who has shown Himself so mighty and zealous for the protection of His worshippers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the very ancestors of those whom you now treat with such unparalleled rigour."—*Lest He fall upon us with pestilence or the sword*. The suffix (*lest he fall upon us*) refers simply to the Israelites, who, according to the common notions of antiquity, fear the anger of the deity, if they neglect to offer him sacrifices in due time. But we are yet by no means prepared to subscribe Wilson's immoderate remark: "The Elohim of the early Jews (?) appears to have been originally conceived in the spirit of Milton's *Moloch*!" The idea seems to have been that the withholding of the bloody sacrifice would *goad him into a fit of destructive fury*." It is needless to animadvert upon the impropriety of an observation which, heedless in itself, is in perfect antagonism not only with the whole spirit of the Old Test. but with distinct passages like the following: "Hath the Lord a delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. xv. 22. Compare Hos. vi. 6. Isaiah i. 11, 12. Psalms xl. 7; li. 18, 19). Ebn Ezra and Abarbanel are of opinion, that the suffix includes Pharaoh and his people in the general calamity, the former being the chief impediment to the proper veneration of God; and Rashi, by way of euphemism, understands the king alone, whom Moses, from motives of fear or respect, hesitated to mention, although he knew perfectly

pestilence, or with the sword. 4. And the king of Egypt said to Moses, Wherefore do you, Moses and Aaron, ¹disturb the people from their works? Go you to your burdens. 5. And Pharaoh said *further*, Behold, the people of the land ²are already many; ³and you will make them rest

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Let.

² Now are many.

³ And ye make them, etc.

well from the predictions of God (iv. 22, 23), that fearful misery would be the inevitable consequence of his disobedience. But it is unnecessary to go beyond the clear and obvious interpretation.

4. *Go you to your burdens.* As Moses and Aaron alone are here represented as speaking to Pharaoh (see ver. 1), these words of the king can possibly only be addressed to them, implying, however, indirectly the whole people, as the representatives and champions of which Moses and Aaron are justly considered. We need, therefore, not to suppose with Rosenmüller and others, that this command is addressed to the elders who accompanied Moses and Aaron, nor much less with Mendelssohn, that they were spoken to the whole people, which had also appeared before Pharaoh. Further, Moses and Aaron, as members of the oppressed Hebrew nation, had to share the hard labours of their brethren, to which Pharaoh here commands them to return. It is impossible to understand with Rashi the words, *go you to your burdens*, of the private or domestic occupations of Moses and Aaron; the expression *your burdens* does not admit of this lenient signification (see i. 11). It is still more hazardous to suppose with Nachmanides, Rashi, and Abarbanel, that not only Moses and Aaron, but the whole tribe of Levi, was exempted from the manual work of their brethren; and that this tribe, which was considered by Pharaoh to consist of the teachers and wise men of the Israelites, enjoyed, besides, other privileges similar to those of the caste of the Egyptian priests. However, the tenour of these verses, and of the concluding part of the preceding chapter (ver. 30) proves, that the tyrannical

control, which the Egyptians exercised over the Hebrews, was not so unremitting and relentless as is usually represented (see note to i. 11).

5. *The people of the land are already many*; that is, the Israelites who are a part of the natives of the land and who, by their sojourn of four hundred years, could be considered as indigenous Egyptians, increase in a menacing degree. It cannot be denied, that the expression, "the people of the land," implies a certain contempt, so that Mendelssohn renders well: *the low people*. The Samaritan version reads: "Behold they (the Israelites) are already more numerous than the people of the country (the Egyptians)," which is against the Hebrew text.—*And you will make them rest from their burdens?* Pharaoh, to whom the Israelites are, by their extraordinary increase, an object of apprehension, believes them to be the more dangerous, if relieved from their breathless labours, and thus permitted to enjoy leisure, in which they might be tempted to scheme rebellious plans for their deliverance (see ver. 9). The Sept. translates: "The people is numerous, let us therefore not allow them to rest from their labours," as if Pharaoh addressed these words to his council (see i. 10), contrary to our text. Still more free is the translation of the Vulgate, from which we should be led to infer, that the cause of Pharaoh's fear was the still greater increase, and not rather the dangerous leisure of the people. As questionable is the opinion of those, who believe that Pharaoh alludes to the great loss which would be caused to him if so vast a multitude of labourers discontinued their works; but this does not appear

from their burdens? 6. And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people and their ¹overseers, saying: 7. You shall not continue to give the people straw to make bricks, as heretofore: let them go

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Officers.

adapted to our context. And as if desirous to show what arts might be displayed in the interpretation of an easy and simple verse, Rosenmüller believes, "Pharaoh addressed the words contained in this versé to the task-masters, who are mentioned in the next verse, but never before in this chapter.—The last resource to which Pharaoh took refuge for the checking of the increase and energy of the Israelites, after all other devices had failed, was incessant work, under which the tyrant hoped they would lose all self-respect, and forget all aspirations for a more honourable condition and treatment. The greater was necessarily his indignation against Moses and Aaron, who revived in the Hebrews the old feelings of independence and liberty, and made them conscious of the degradation to which they were reduced by the despotism of the king.

6. And Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their overseers. The former were, most probably, Egyptians, who superintended the public works, and prescribed the tasks to be executed; the latter were Israelites (see ver. 14, 15), who controlled the workmen, watched that those tasks were duly performed, and who were responsible to the former. Thus one taskmaster had the superintendence over many overseers (*Shoterim*). The real meaning and the exact functions of the *Shoterim*, is a matter of much dispute; it appears, however, that the question might, in the following manner, be brought to a certain conclusion. There are, especially, two different opinions on the subject, which deserve our notice; the one deriving the word from the Arabic verb to write; so that it would be *writer, public registrar* (French *greffier*); the other connecting it with the substan-

tive *præfectus, overseer, officer*. But as every overseer, or officer, has to furnish reports or accounts, both significations are naturally kindred, and, in reality, but one. Hence it will not appear surprising that the *Shoterim* filled the following various offices: 1st. According to our passage they were the medium between their own brethren and the Egyptian task-masters. 2nd. They were the coadjutors of the elders (in Num. xi. 16, the elders themselves; see Deut. xix. 9); 3rd. the assistants of the military commanders (Deut. i. 15; 2 Chron. xxvi. 11), and, 4th. in some respects, the colleagues of the judges (Deut. xvi. 18; Josh. viii. 33; xxiv. 1, 4); and, therefore, elective like them. 5th. They performed the functions of *censors*, or comptrollers, of the army (1 Chron. xxvii. 1); and, 6th. They had, probably, to keep the statistical and genealogical lists of the people, although this might not have been their principal duty. All these offices make the knowledge of writing a fundamental condition, and show that the *Shoterim* were not subordinate functionaries, but officers of a much superior rank, frequently taken from among the Levites, the most instructed part of the people (2 Chron. xix. 11). It is well known, that the Egyptians had also scribes with functions similar to those of the corresponding Hebrew magistrates; and that even now the Arabic fellahs, whose position is very analogous to that of the Israelites described in our text, are treated by the Turks in the same manner. Arabic overseers have to give an account of the labours of their countrymen to the Turkish taskmasters, who often chastise them mercilessly for the real or imputed offences of the Arabic workmen (see *Rosellini*, ii. 2. p. 257. ii. 3. 218; *Wilkinson*, Eg. and Theb. i. p. 393).

and gather straw for themselves. 8. And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, you shall lay upon them; you shall diminish nothing thereof: for they *are* idle: therefore they cry, Let us go *and* sacrifice to our God. 9. ²Let the work be hard upon the men, *so* that

² *Engl. Vers.*—Let there more work be laid upon.

7. *You shall not continue to give, etc.* This verse describes accurately and faithfully the custom prevailing in Egypt with regard to the preparation of bricks. We have an abundance of testimonials proving the fact, that the Egyptians manufactured their bricks from clay taken from the Nile, with which they mixed straw cut into small pieces, in order to give them firmness and compactness; and after the bricks thus prepared have been dried in the sun, they are of such hardness and durability that they defy the destructive influence of millenniums, especially in dry climates like Egypt, where rain is rare; and Rosellini has recently brought some of them from Egypt, which bear the name of Thotmes IV., the fifth king of the eighteenth dynasty. On being analysed they were found to contain an admixture of straw, which is, however, the less in quantity the more carefully they are prepared, and the better the clay is of which they are made (see *Rosellini*, ii. 2. p. 252). The bricks of the first pyramid in Dashur are made of slime of the Nile, mixed with chopped straw. Philo already says, "straw is the tie of bricks." And Michaelis observes on our passage: "It must not be imagined that the straw was used for *burning* the bricks, for which perhaps all the straw of Egypt would not have sufficed; but the clay employed for the manufacture of the bricks was mixed with straw in order to enhance its consistency." This is still the prevailing usage in many districts of Africa and Southern Asia. Moses nowhere speaks of *burning* bricks; and Egypt would have been unable to furnish the necessary firing materials, as that country is notorious for its scarcity of wood. Luther is therefore mistaken in

translating: "to burn bricks" (see *Charadin*, *Travels*, iv. p. 112; *Shaw*, *Travels*, p. 136; *Baumgarten*, *Travels*, Ch. 18; *Hasselquist*, *Travels*, p. 100; *Pococke*, *Observations on Egypt*, p. 53; *Rosenmüller*, *Orient*, i. 271—274).

8. *And the tale of the bricks, etc.* The same amount of bricks which were imposed upon the Israelites when they were provided with straw by the royal officers was to be exacted from them now also, when they had first to seek this material themselves.—*For they are idle*; therefore, 1st. they can do more work than hitherto, and 2nd. this is the reason why they wish to celebrate festivals.

9. *Let the work be hard, etc.* Pharaoh pronounces in this verse openly and unblushingly the leading principle of his tyrannical policy, which had urged him to oppress the Israelites with rigorous and unremitting labours, and which he had already hinted at in a former remark addressed to Moses and Aaron (ver. 5); namely, that the oppressive works were intended to prevent the minds of the enslaved Hebrews from indulging in plans of deliverance, and ever remembering the favourable circumstances under which their ancestors had immigrated into Egypt, and the encouraging promises they had received from the monarch who then ruled in Egypt. This general sense of the verse being incontrovertibly clear, the signification of the only doubtful word which it contains in the Hebrew text (שׁוּעָ), cannot be difficult. It means in our passage (and Psalm cxix. 16), *to look to any one for aid*; so that the purport of the words of the king is: oppress the people with toilsome and breathless labours, entirely absorbing all their energies and their whole attention, so that they have neither the desire nor the lei-

they may ¹have *fully* to do with it, and not ²listen to vain words. 10. And the taskmasters of the people and their overseers went out, and they spoke to the people, saying, Thus ³hath Pharaoh said: I shall not give you straw. 11. Go you, take for yourselves straw from *any place* where you can find it: yet nothing shall be diminished of your work. 12. So the people were scattered abroad throughout the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw. 13. And the taskmasters urged *them*, saying,

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Labour therein.

² Regard.

³ Saith.

sure to listen to the idle words of Moses and Aaron, who flatter them with vain hopes of deliverance. We have, in the larger edition of this work, reviewed the various interpretations of that verb offered by the different translators and commentators; and remark here but briefly, that the Septuagint renders: "they shall not meditate about, or think of idle words;" Rashi: "they shall not reflect on, and speak of, vain plans;" Targum Onkelos: "and let them not occupy themselves with vain words;" Saadiah: "and they shall not lean upon idle words;" Ebn Ezra: "and let them not be idle in their works on account of the vain illusions by which Moses and Aaron deceive them;" and Kimchi: *to look with confidence, to hope*; and thus renders Jonathan, which interpretation approaches nearest to that given above.

10. *And the taskmasters.....went out*, namely, from the palace of the king to the places where the people worked.

11. *Yet nothing shall be diminished of your work*. Rashi, following the version of the Targumim, interprets: "You must gather straw *with eagerness and perseverance*, for nothing will be remitted to you from your usual work"; and this view, which is also expressed by the Septuagint, has been adopted by Mendelssohn, Rosenmüller, Cahen, and others. But it is unusual, that the very words on which the greatest stress lies, should be elliptically omitted.

12. *And the people were scattered abroad*. It is unnecessary to translate

with Ebn Ezra: "And Pharaoh scattered the people."

13. *And the (Egyptian) taskmasters urged them*, namely, the Hebrew workmen or overseers (see ver. 14). — *As when there was straw*. Onkelos, Jonathan, the Septuagint, and Vulgate, render according to the sense: "As you were used to do when straw was given to you."

14. *And the overseers of the children of Israel were beaten*. See to ver. 6. The overseers (Shoterim) being Israelites, they treated their co-religionists with consideration, not demanding of them tasks which they were physically unable to accomplish. But when the taskmasters, who were Egyptians, found that the number of bricks finished by the Hebrew workmen did not reach the exorbitant amount which they had imposed upon them, the overseers were ill-treated and beaten for the indulgence evinced for their brethren. It will be known to our readers, that even at present the rule of the stick is generally prevalent in many parts of the East. Blows are the ordinary means of punishment; they are scarcely considered a degradation; they belong to the natural prerogatives of the superior; and are the most obvious emblem of his mastery. Neither rank, nor learning, nor old age can protect against the ruthless tyranny of the stick; and not unfrequently are European travellers shocked by scenes of revolting barbarism committed publicly against venerable individuals for the slightest offences, after

Finish your work, *your* daily tasks, as when there was straw. 14. And the overseers of the children of Israel whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten ¹ with the words, Wherefore have you not finished your task in making bricks as heretofore, both yesterday and to-day? 15. Then the overseers of the children of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, saying, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? 16. There is no straw given to thy servants; and they say to us, Make

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And demanded.

the despotic humour of Oriental masters. — *Wherefore have you not finished your task?* i.e., Why did not you take care that the workmen under your control finished the quantity of bricks ordered to them? Compare the drawing of Rosellini alluded to in our note to i. 14. The sense of the whole phrase amounts to this: Wherefore have you not finished your *usual* task, *neither yesterday nor to-day?* To which Ebn Ezra observes, that the people neglected their work on the day when Moses performed the three signs before them (iv. 30), nor could they finish their task on the following day, when after the interview of Moses and Aaron with Pharaoh (ver. 6), they were ordered to furnish the same amount of bricks, without straw being given to them.

15. The kings of Egypt probably held on certain days a sort of open court or divan, as usual in Oriental monarchies, when every subject was allowed to appear to seek justice or to claim redress; and thus the Hebrew overseers had free access to the royal ear, and opportunities were afforded to them to represent to Pharaoh their grievances and oppressions, the responsibilities for which, therefore, if left without alteration or remedy, fell with still greater weight on the conscience of the tyrannical king.

16. *And behold, thy servants are beaten; but thy people sins.* The last words, which have given rise to a multiplicity of conflicting versions and interpretations, appear to imply a hidden

and modest hint on the part of the Hebrew overseers, that the arbitrary and tyrannical conduct of the Egyptian task-masters—who are here identified with the whole Egyptian nation, and who are, in fact, but the instruments of the despotic commands of the king—will ultimately call down upon them the just chastisement of the deity, under whose immediate protection the oppressed people stands. Targum Jonathan nearly expresses the sense as here explained: “And the sin of thy people is great and heavy”; and, with unimportant modifications, Ebn Ezra, Rosenmüller, and De Wette; and Pater-son paraphrases: “but the guilt of this oppression and tyranny will be charged on thy own people.” The Septuagint, however, translates: “thou wrongest thy people;” so that “thy people” would refer to the Israelites, not the Egyptians. And so also the Syrian version. But against such interpretation militates: 1. the adopted Hebrew text; 2. the disrespect and impropriety which would be implied in such almost impertinent language used in the face of the king; and 3. the apparent antithesis of *thy servants*, and *thy people*, which would be destroyed by referring the latter to the Israelites. Some have very improperly thus explained that antithesis: “*we* (the overseers) are punished, whilst the *people* are the offenders”; for it was certainly not the intention of the Hebrew overseers to throw the fault upon their unfortunate brethren, with whose misery they so

bricks: and, behold, thy servants *are* beaten; ¹but thy people sins. 17. But he said, You *are* idle, *you are* idle: therefore you say, Let us go *and* sacrifice to the Lord. 18. Go therefore now, *and* work; for there shall no straw be given to you, yet shall you deliver the tale of bricks. 19. And the overseers of the children of Israel saw *that* they *were* in an evil *position*, since it was said, You shall

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—But the fault is in thine own people.

deeply sympathised. The Vulgate in rendering: “et injuste agitur contra populum tuum,” mitigates the second, without obviating the other two objections. Rashi explains: “And this conduct brings sin over thy people”; which sense it would be difficult grammatically to deduce from the Hebrew text. Mendelssohn translates: “And thy people is treated like offenders,” which explanation is also given by Clericus and Glaire (et que ton peuple est traité en coupable); but these versions and explanations seem to be also framed with disregard of the original phrase; *to sin* and *to be treated as a sinner*, are two very different notions, which it is impossible to ascribe to the same word without conclusive proofs. The rendering in Zunz’s Bible is unintelligible (“und es fehlt deinem Volke”). The exposition of Abarbanel, that the Hebrew overseers went to Pharaoh, believing that the task-masters acted so rigorously from their own arbitrariness and against the will and knowledge of the king, so that they said to him: “thy people—that is, thy task-masters—sin, not thyself”; this exposition, sagacious as it is, militates against ver. 6, according to which the new edict was pronounced by the king to the task-masters in the presence of the overseers; although, as we have observed above, it is not improper to designate the taskmasters as *the people* of Egypt.

17. The same commentator finds in the emphatical repetition of the word *idle* (see to ver. 8) an allusion to the fact, that in the opinion of Pharaoh the Hebrews had no right to complain of this aggravation of their labours, as they

had only to furnish the same quantity of bricks as heretofore, although they had lately so considerably increased; so that if straw were provided to them as before, they would have too much leisure to think of idle hopes and dangerous schemes. However, this argument is fallacious, as, no doubt, the same amount of bricks was not imposed upon the Israelites *collectively* but *individually*: and thus the new measure affected them most grievously.

18. *Go therefore now, and work.* This command is obviously addressed to the overseers, who probably not only exercised the supervision over the Hebrew labourers, but were also obliged to employ the time which was unoccupied by that ungrateful office, with the same degrading works under which their brethren sighed.

19. *And the overseers of the children of Israel saw that they were in an evil position.* As the overseers were directly responsible to the task-masters for the execution of the tasks imposed upon the Hebrew workmen (see ver. 14), every new severity of the king affected them even more immediately than the Israelitish people; and nothing was left them but the melancholy privilege of retaliating against their own co-religionists the abuses they had endured themselves, a privilege, from the exercise of which they had the more reason to abstain, as they were themselves perfectly convinced of the utter incapability of the workmen to satisfy the heartless command of the king. And this implies an affecting feature in the conduct of the overseers, who in their embarrassing dilemma, pre-

diminish nothing from your bricks of your daily task. 20. And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in their way, when they came from Pharaoh. 21. And they said to them, The Lord may look upon you, and judge; because you have made our odour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword into their hand to slay us. 22. And Moses returned to the Lord, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou done so

ferred leniency towards their brethren to the selfish attempt of avoiding the royal wrath. Less acceptable, is, therefore, the opinion of those who explain, that the overseers "saw the condition of the workmen," and were grieved at their deplorable fate. Abarbanel carrying out his doubtful conception of this whole passage (see ver. 16), explains: "Now were the overseers convinced that *they*, i. e., the task-masters and the king, were in unison in these tyrannical measures."

20. And *they* (namely, the overseers, and not, as Rashi supplies, some Israelites) met Moses and Aaron.

21. The Lord may look upon you and judge; that is, the Lord may search your imprudent conduct, and examine your cause. The rendering of Onkelos, therefore, who translates, from a misconception of the Hebrew verb, *the Lord may appear to you*, is to be rejected as obscure and inappropriate.—*Because you have made our odour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh*, i. e., you have made us hateful, odious in the eyes of Pharaoh. The notion of a bad, fetid smell, seems not quite adapted in connection with *the eyes*; however, in Hebrew, the five senses are sometimes promiscuously used without that nice distinction which modern languages observe in this respect; for instance, "*Truly the light is sweet*" (Eccles. xii. 7), or, "all the people *saw the thunders*" (Exod. xx. 15). In primitive languages, in which imagination prevails over reflection, the metaphors are not unfrequently accumulated to such a degree that they sometimes destroy each other; but what the expressions thus lose in logic, they usually gain in force and richness. Such irregularity

of diction is, therefore, not unfrequent in original minds, and Shakespeare's works abound in it; for instance, Hamlet speaks of "*taking arms against a sea of troubles*" (iii. 1). Besides, our phrase belongs to those, in which the original figurative sense of the verb has, by frequent use, become obliterated, so that, in the course of time, it was reduced to the general meaning of: *to make odious*, without simultaneously calling forth the notion of bad odour (compare the German verb *anrühig werden*).—*To put a sword into their hand to slay us*, that is, to make us suspected in their eyes; to furnish them with a pretext for increased rigour against us, whom they believe to have conspired against their legitimate sovereign for our violent deliverance.

22. How could Moses be surprised at the obstinacy of Pharaoh, and complain so despondingly, as God had distinctly predicted to him that the Egyptian despot would not allow the Israelites to leave the land before He had displayed His might and His wonders against him (iii. 19)? But Moses recalled to his mind with greater force such promises of God as: "I have seen the affliction of my people in Egypt, and have heard their cry about their task-masters" (iii. 7), or, "the cry of the children of Israel is come to me, and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them" (ver. 9), plainly expressive of an alleviation of their burthens. And, therefore, he was not prepared to offer a satisfactory reply to the Hebrew overseers. Nachmanides, who raises the same question, answers it by the supposition, that Moses had ex-

evil to this people? wherefore *is it that* thou hast sent me? 23. For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Thy name, he hath done evil to this people; nor hast Thou in any way delivered Thy people.

pected, God would, immediately after the first insolent expressions of Pharaoh, strike him with all His plagues and punishments; and that the impatient messenger could not understand or appreciate this long-suffering delay of the eternal judge, who evidently wished to afford abundant time for the hardened tyrant to repent, and to listen to the better dictates of his conscience. We repeat, that the desponding complaint of Moses was not the result of disbelief or doubt, but the effort of a pious soul

struggling after a deeper penetration into the mysteries of the Almighty—who far from condemning such fluctuations of the “deceitful heart”—looks with indulgence on human weakness and short-sightedness (see vi. 1).

23. *For since I came.* Only when the obstinacy of Pharaoh, and the misery of the people of Israel had reached the highest gradation, God proceeded to chastise the one, and to alleviate the other.

CHAPTERS VI. 1 TO VII. 7.

SUMMARY.—Before inflicting upon Pharaoh the chastisements provoked by his despotic and impious refractoriness, God reveals Himself to Moses in new and solemn communications, under the holy attributes of the *Eternal and Immutable Being*, and promises the redemption of Israel from Egypt, and their conquest of Palestine: 1, by virtue of those attributes (see ver. 1); 2, on account of the covenant concluded with the patriarchs; and, 3, in consequence of Pharaoh's tyranny, now carried to a revolting degree (ver. 2—8).—Moses reports these repeated divine assurances to the people, who, however, by the excess of their oppression, had despairingly resigned every hope, and now scarcely listened to the consoling words of Moses (ver. 9). But God re-iterates His commands to Moses, although the latter raises again the objection concerning his deficiency of speech (ver. 10—13; 28—30; vii. 1—7).—Before, however, Moses and Aaron enter upon their important mission, it was thought expedient to exhibit their descent from, and connection with, the family of Jacob; and therefore the genealogy of the three tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi is here inserted (ver. 14—27), with a more detailed description of the family of Levi, among the members of which, again, Moses and Aaron are singled out with particular stress (ver. 26, 27).

THEN the Lord said to Moses, Now shalt thou see what I shall do to Pharaoh; for ¹by a strong hand will he send them away, and ¹by a strong hand will he drive them out of his land.

¹ *Engl. Vers.* — With.

1. *For by a strong hand will he send them away*, that is, compelled by the judgments and visitations of God will Pharaoh not only allow but precipitate the departure of the Israelites. This explanation, offered by Rashi, and adopted

by Rashbam, Rosenmüller, De Wette, Zunz, Arnheim and Gerlach, and expressed also by the Vulgate, Luther and Patterson, “constrained by an overmastering force,” is by far preferable to the indistinct rendering of the Septuagint,

2. And God spoke to Moses, and said to him, *I am* the Lord. 3. And I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, by *the name of God Almighty*, but by my name

Arabic, Mendelssohn, and the English Version: "*with a strong hand he will send them away,*" which would convey a perfectly incorrect notion.

2, 3. The demands which Moses had addressed to Pharaoh, had produced the alarming result of a still more rigorous and cruel treatment of the Israelites. Moses, naturally desponding and without boldness or self-assurance, was still more intimidated by the reproaches with which he was assailed both by the king (ver. 4) and the people (ver. 21), and in this oppressed and isolated position, in which national and personal grief mingled in his patriotic and sensitive heart, he asked God, in humility, why He had ordered him to appear before Pharaoh, if it was not His intention to bless his mission with success. Now, therefore, when the tyrannical obstinacy of the king made the long threatened punishments and plagues unavoidable, even for the long-suffering of God, the appropriate moment had come to fill Moses anew with confidence and firmness of resolution, which were henceforth but rarely to forsake him in extraordinary trials; and to reveal to him the hitherto misunderstood and unappreciated awful divine attributes, which described Him as both willing and competent to rescue the Israelites. Whilst the patriarchs had known God only under the name of the Omnipotent, the all-powerful Being (Gen. xvii. 1; xxviii. 3, etc.); the Creator of heaven and earth (Gen. xiv. 19); and the Ruler of *nature* and the *natural* destinies of man, which, however, does not exclude many miraculous events; and although the sacred name of God (*Jehovah*) was already mentioned to them (Gen. xv. 7; xxii. 14; xxviii. 13, etc.); yet the true and deep purport of this designation was not *understood* and comprehended by them. This important revelation, which Moses received already when

God appeared to him for the first time (iii. 14, 15, see our notes), namely, that God is *eternal and immutable*, that therefore all His promises, if they even embrace centuries and millenniums, are unfailingly realised in due season; and that the assurances given to Abraham concerning the ultimate glorious redemption of the oppressed Israelites from Egypt (Gen. xv. 14) are likewise on the point of being fulfilled: this revelation is now, for the first time, to be communicated to, and spread among, the Israelites; it is to strengthen their hopes, to erect them in their dejection, and, finally to contribute to the perpetual glorification of God, who, by the deliverance of Israel (ver. 6), and their conquest of Canaan (ver. 8), will be recognised not only as all-powerful, but also immutable in His designs and promises. The knowledge of the name *Jehovah* was, henceforth, not the exclusive privilege of a few favoured individuals, but it became the designation of the national God of Israel, the appellation of the God of the eternal covenant. What had been a dim craving to the patriarchs, was now raised to a clear conviction in the mind of even the lowest of the people; time had worked its enlightening influence, and in the school of misery, the religious feeling had been matured into an intellectual knowledge. Thus had Israel acquired the first and primary condition of its august mission as instructor of the world; and from the conscious knowledge of the Eternal and Immutable, to the proclamation of the Decalogue was but one step.—Saadiah supplies the word *alone* after, "but under my name, the Eternal *alone* (exclusively) I have not been known to them, but promiscuously, by *Jehovah*, and God Almighty," which opinion has already been refuted by Ebn Ezra, who justly rejects the opinion of those also, who assert, that the name *Jehovah* was, in fact, never used in the time

¹the Eternal was I not known to them. 4. And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their ²sojourns wherein they sojourned. 5. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage,

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—The Lord.

² Pilgrimage wherein they were strangers.

of the patriarchs, but that Moses introduced it in some passages of Genesis as a name most familiar to himself; but this is impossible, in Gen. xv. 7; xxii. 16, and xxviii. 13, where God Himself speaks under that holy name; and in Gen. xxii. 14, where Abraham uses it. And yet is this opinion repeated by Philippon: "The use of the holy name of God, in Genesis, is to be ascribed to the author." The only possible explanation is that already alluded to: "My name *Jehovah* has not been *understood* and *comprehended* by the patriarchs in its essence and depth, although it was, even in their time, already occasionally mentioned." Ebn Ezra, coinciding almost literally with the author of Cusari (ii. 2.), says, that certainly the name *Jehovah* was already known to the patriarchs, but only as an uncomprehended and unmeaning proper noun, but not as a descriptive appellative noun, indicative of the attributes and qualities of God. —It is manifest that Moses, in being initiated in the holy and comprehensive name of the Deity, obtains a superiority over the patriarchs, who, although perhaps from the beginning more believing than the long-wavering Moses, lived more in the sphere of innocent childlike obedience than of manly spiritual enlightenment. The lawgiver was considered as the greatest prophet before and after him (Deut. xxiv. 10). Mendelssohn translates, or rather paraphrases, aptly: "but with my nature, which is infinite and all-powerful, I have not been understood (*erkannt*) by them;" Rashi: "I have not been known with my true attributes;" and still more explicitly, Abarbanel: "I was not known and understood by them with the name *Jehovah*, although I appeared

to them under that appellation; because they received their revelations not face to face, but through other mediums." And certainly a name of God, already, in some respects, though indistinctly, familiar to the Israelites, must have inspired them with far more confidence in His identity than a designation totally strange to them.

4. *To give them the land of Canaan.* These promises were made to each patriarch separately, to Abraham in Gen. xvii. 7, 8; to Isaac, in xxvi. 3, and to Jacob, in xxxv. 12.—*The land of their sojourns, wherein they sojourned.* Canaan was, to the fathers, only the land of their temporary abode, in which they resided as strangers, but which was promised to their descendants as a hereditary and permanent possession. Abarbanel urges this addition, explaining: "they were but *strangers* in Canaan, and thus the promise of God was not yet fulfilled, although they found there, for a time, a hospitable reception."

5. I am unchangeable and my plans are unalterable (ver. 3); I have promised to your ancestors the possession of Canaan after a certain time of trial and misery (ver. 4, and Gen. xv. 16); this period of oppression is now drawing near its close (ver. 5); and I shall, therefore, fulfil my promise by rescuing you, with great judgments, from your oppressors (ver. 6, *et seq.*). This is the context of our passage.—*And I have remembered my covenant*, namely, made with Abraham, concerning the slavery and ultimate deliverance of his progeny (Gen. xv. 13—16). Ebn Ezra finds in the words: *And I have heard the groaning of the children of Israel*, an allusion to the fact, that the Israelites now repented, abandoned their idolatrous

and I have remembered my covenant. 6. Wherefore say to the children of Israel, I *am* 'the Eternal, and I shall bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I shall rescue you out of their bondage, and I shall redeem you with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments: 7. And I shall take you to me for a people,

worship, and addressed their pious prayers to the God of their fathers. This interpretation is as little justified by the context as that of Abarbanel, who believes that the phrase: *I have remembered my covenant*, does not apply to the promise made to their ancestors, but describes God as the judge of mankind, who is resolved to persecute the despotic king with just afflictions.

6. *Wherefore, say to the children of Israel, I am the Eternal*, that is, I am unshaken in my designs; I promise and fulfil (ver. 3), and I shall redeem you from your bondage with a stretched out arm, and *with great judgments*. The three parts of our verse, beginning with "I shall bring you out;" "I shall rescue you;" and "I shall redeem you," convey nearly equivalent ideas; we reject therefore the artificial distinctions introduced by some interpreters.

7. *And I will take you to me for a people*, namely, by the legislation of Mount Sinai, by which Israel became the *chosen people* (xix. 5), or the *first-born son of God* (iv. 22); and this was the higher spiritual end of Israel's deliverance from their physical bondage; and therefore the redemption from Egypt is almost constantly brought into connection with the most important laws of the Pentateuch, even in the Decalogue. Those words will by no unbiassed critic be considered as expressing haughtiness, assumption, or exclusive spirit on the part of the Israelites, but merely containing the undeniable historical fact, that they were the first and earliest worshippers of the true God, whose adoration they were so far from guarding with jealous particularism, that its propagation among all the nations of the earth belonged to the

most enthusiastic hopes and the most fondly cherished wishes of the Hebrew prophets (see Isaiah xix. 24, 25; Zechar. xiv. 10). We declare here once for all positively, that expressions like *God of the Hebrews*, do in no way justify us to suppose, that according to Biblical notions, the dominion of God was limited to that people, whilst the other countries had their own, although less powerful deities. This opinion, which would "convert the monotheism into monolatry," has even been repeated by Bohlen, who asserts, that *Jehovah* looked upon the other gods as his equals in essence, although he combated them as his antagonists, and considered them less powerful than himself, as indeed every nation believes its own deity to be the mightiest. To refute this opinion, it is sufficient to point to the designations with which the other gods are mentioned in the Bible; they are called *nothings*, *non-entities* (Lev. xix. 4); *idle productions of the imagination* (Deut. xxxii. 21); even with so severe a name as *abominations* (Lev. xxvi. 30; Deut. xxix. 16); often coupled with synonymous terms equally descriptive of the utter contempt with which they were regarded (Deut. xxix. 16, and Ezekiel xvi. 36). Are such *non-entities* "equals in essence" to the "God of Israel," the *Creator of heaven and earth* (Gen. i.), the *Judge of the whole earth* (Gen. xviii. 25), the *God of the spirits of all flesh* (Num. xvi. 22), to whom *belong the heavens and the heavens of heavens, the earth and all that is upon it* (Deut. x. 14)? He fills the universe; and His spirit pervades so entirely all space and time, that scarcely a sphere of existence, much less a sphere of action, is left to the pagan

and I shall be to you a God: and you shall know that I am ¹the Eternal your God, who bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8. And I shall bring you into the land, concerning which I swore to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I shall give it you for an heritage: I am ¹the Eternal. 9. And Moses spoke so to the children of Israel: but they hearkened not to Moses, ²through shortness of breath and through hard bondage.—10. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—The Lord.

² For anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.

gods. Compare also our notes on xix. 3—6.

8. *Concerning which I swore*, literally: I have lifted up my hand to give it (the land), i. e., I have sworn; for it is an ancient and far spread custom—here also anthropomorphistically attributed to God—to swear by raising the hand, as if to invoke heaven as a witness of the truth of the assertions (Compare Num. xiv. 30; Deut. xxxii. 40). This oath of God securing the land of Canaan to the descendants of Abraham is related in Gen. xxii. 16—18, beginning with: *I swear by myself, saith the Lord.*—*And I shall give it you for an heritage*, not merely as a land of sojourning, as it was to your ancestors, who were strangers therein (see ver. 4), or like your abodes in Egypt, the sovereignty of which belongs to a prince of another nation. The whole solemn address of God, in which the past promises are most lucidly combined with the present misery and the future glory, and which forms, therefore, the transition to a new epoch in the history of Israel, concludes emphatically with the repeated exclamation: “*I am the Eternal*” (Jehovah), which includes these three epochs in its deep and significant import.

9. *But they hearkened not to Moses.* At his first message (iv. 31), they received Moses joyfully and showed confidence in his promises; but now, when they suffered still severer hardships than before, they turned away from him; they neither listened to him, nor accepted the consolation offered to them.—*Through shortness*

of breath. This literal translation appears to be better adapted here than the more figurative rendering of the Septuagint by *pusillanimity*, or De Wette and others by *impatience*; compare Num. xxi. 4; Judg. x. 16; Job xxi. 4; or of the English Version by “*Anguish of spirit.*” Abarbanel also finds in these words the sufferings and grief of the soul, as in the following phrase: “*through hard bondage*” the torments of the body. (The same commentator ingeniously observes, that the holy text does not say, “*they did not believe*” (see iv. 31), but only, they did not listen; so also in ver. 12). The words, *and through hard bondage* are added to *shortness of breath* as an explanation, according to the Hebraism already noticed on iv. 12, to illustrate difficult or ambiguous words by easier and more unmistakeable expressions connected with the preceding phrase by the conjunction *and*. Arnheim takes both phrases as a Hendiadys instead of “*through impatience at the hard bondage.*”—The minds of the Israelites were in such a state of sad despondency, so exhausted and worn out, that they had yielded to a torpid resignation, and an obtuse indifference to their fate, so that even tidings of hope had not the power to stir and animate their apathetic indolence. So perfectly had the Egyptian despot gained his end! (v. 4, 5, 8).

10. It cannot be denied that the following part of this chapter, and the beginning of the following to ver. 7, is so

11. Go, speak to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. 12. And Moses spoke before the Lord, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened to me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who *am* of uncircumcised lips? 13. Thus the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, and gave them a charge to the children of Israel, and to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.—14. These *are* the heads of their fathers' houses: The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, and

obscure in its internal connection and structure, that the often repeated assertion, that we have here incoherent fragments unskillfully inserted in the context, appears, at the first glance, not without foundation. For neither contain ver. 11—13, and ver. 26 to vii. 7, any new information, nor does the genealogy (ver. 14—25) seem in its proper place here; this whole long passage appears, on the contrary, only to interrupt the tenor of the narrative, which would, most appropriately, from the emphatical declaration of God (ver. 2—8) have passed over to the miracles and punishments leading to the Exodus of the Israelites.—However, as to the genealogy, it is obvious that as Moses and Aaron were now on the point of executing their important mission to Pharaoh, and as here the more memorable era in their lives begins, it was expedient to delineate their descent, and to show in what way and degree they are connected with the family of Jacob. Moreover, genealogical accounts are the easiest and most natural thread for the connection of historical events separated by centuries, and are, especially in Oriental historiography, considered as an essential part (see note on ver. 16). Nor can it, from this point of view, surprise that the genealogy includes only the three tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, and that the former two are but briefly treated; since it was only necessary to show, that Levi was the *third* son of Jacob.—The contents of ver. 11—13 are repeated in ver. 28—30, in order to resume the

narrative, which had been interrupted by the insertion of the genealogy. Compare Gen. xxxvii. 36, and xxxix. 1. If, moreover, the reiteration of the same ideas is urged, due regard ought to be paid to the genius of the ancient, especially the Oriental languages, in which the principal and leading ideas are repeatedly introduced, and often with nearly the same words. See note on ver. 12.

11. Go, namely, into the palace of the king.

12. Moses had reported to the Israelites the commands of God; but they did not listen to him (ver. 9); therefore God ordered Moses to address his request now directly to Pharaoh, as the Israelites would certainly seize the opportunity to leave Egypt if the king permitted it (ver. 11). But Moses objected—1st. that the Israelites did not hearken to his representation; how much less would Pharaoh consent, who would suffer great disadvantages by his compliance: and 2nd. that he was not gifted with the necessary power and grace of speech (ver. 12). Nevertheless God charged him anew to appeal again, accompanied by Aaron, both to the Israelites and to Pharaoh, and to repeat his commission, firmly promising that he would, at last, prevail (ver. 13). This is the natural and unforced connection of these verses.—*Of uncircumcised lips* is synonymous with the term: “not a man of words,” in iv. 10, on which see our remarks. Targum Onkelos and Jonathan explain, correctly, *heavy of speech*. The exact

Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. These *are* the families of Reuben. 15. And the sons of Simeon: Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman. These *are* the families of Simeon. 16. And these *are* the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari; and the years of the life of Levi *were* one hundred and thirty-seven years. 17. The sons of Gershon: Libni, and Shimi, according to their families. 18. And the sons of Kohath: Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel; and the years of the life of Kohath *were* one hundred and thirty-three years. 19. And the sons of Merari: Mahali and Mushi. These *are* the families of Levi according to

meaning of this phrase denotes a man "whose lips are closed, as it were, with the foreskin, and are, therefore, too long and thick to utter speech with facility" (Gesen.) The same metaphor is used of the heart (Lev. xxvi. 41; Ez. xlv. 9), and of the ear (Jer. vi. 10). It is, therefore, unnecessary, if not absurd, to suppose, with Clericus and others, that the skin by which the tongue of the new-born children is connected with the inner part of the mouth, had not been properly *cut off*, and that thus Moses was "uncircumcised of lips."

13. Rashi observes, that as Moses had objected that he was no man of eloquence, God addressed now Moses and Aaron, associating to him the latter as a spokesman. Our verse seems rather to contain a concise summary of the history of Israel's redemption, as far as it is hitherto related in the text.—*And He gave them a charge to the children of Israel.* How these words "raise the position of Moses into a significant sublimity, and bear the character of pompous boasting" as Philippon asserts, it is difficult to comprehend.

14. *The heads of their fathers' houses.* The Hebrew *tribes* were divided into *families* (gentes, *δῆμοι*); and the families again into *fathers' houses* (*οἶκοι πατριῶν*; compare Joshua vii. 14—18). These

fathers' houses stood under the authority of *chiefs*, or *heads of fathers' houses*, who were, probably, like the chiefs of the tribes, elective, not hereditary dignities (*πατριάρχαι*, patriarchs, as the Septuagint sometimes appropriately translates). However, not unfrequently *father's house* is used instead of *family*; for instance, in Num. iii. 24, 30, 35; and this is the case in our passage also (see the first and last words of ver. 14); sometimes even both expressions are pleonastically combined, as Num. i. 2, 18, etc; ii. 34: "to their families, to their fathers' houses." Now of Reuben and Simeon, the *families* (*συγγένεια* or *πατρίαι*) are but briefly mentioned, whilst the tribe of Levi is more completely specified, with its families and members, from the reason already stated on ver. 10. Compare Genesis xlv. 8—11.

15. The family of Ohad must have died out already in Egypt, or in the desert, because it is not mentioned in the genealogy contained in Numb. xxvi. 12 (Ebn Ezra). Instead of *Zohar* we find there (ver. 13) *Zerah*; both words, however, have the same meaning, *splendour*.

16. *According to their generations;* that is, with their families, or descendants (see ver. 17, 19). De Sacy, correctly: "et la suite de leur familles." As the origin and descent of Moses and Aaron

their generations. 20. And Amram took to himself Jochebed his aunt to wife, and she bare him Aaron and Moses; and the years of the life of Amram *were* one hundred and thirty-seven years. 21. And the sons of Izhar: Korah, and Nepheg, and Zichri. 22. And the sons of Uzziel: Mishaël, and Elzaphan, and Sithri. 23. And Aaron took to himself Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab, sister of Nahshon, to wife; and she bare him Nadab, and Abihu, Elazar, and Ithamar. 24. And the sons of Korah: Assir, and Elkanah, and Abiasaph. These are the families of the Korhite. 25. And Elazar Aaron's son took to himself *one* of the daughters of Putiel to wife; and she bare him Pinchas. These *are* the heads of the

is the chief and almost exclusive purpose of the genealogy here inserted, the *ages* of his direct ancestors are likewise mentioned, namely, that of Levi (137 years), Kohath (133 years), and Amram (137 years). Biblical chronology, a science as important as it is difficult, has a safe and welcome basis in the almost regular, and generally exact, statements of the ages of the representatives of the respective generations; and these continuous, almost uninterrupted statements, are another weighty proof of the unity of the Old Testament as a whole. Thus we find mentioned the years of the generations from Adam to Noah; from Noah to Abraham; then successively the lives of Isaac, Jacob, Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses, Joshua, the Judges, and the Kings; then the exile of seventy years, and, lastly, the further generations during the second temple, in the book of Daniel.

20. *And Amram took to himself Jochebed his aunt to wife.* Targum Onkelos translates correctly: "his father's sister;" for Jochebed was the daughter of Levi, born to him in Egypt (Num. xxvi. 59), and, therefore, the sister of Kohath, the father of Amram; see, however, our note on ii. 1, and *Introduction*, § 2.—Some manuscripts have, "and Miriam their sister," after "Aaron," which

addition is also expressed by the Samaritan, the Septuagint, and the Syrian versions. Although Miriam takes not an unimportant part in the following history, we are not justified in inserting here these words, as the female progeny is generally not enumerated in genealogies.

21, 22. The sons of Kohath are: 1st. Amram, 2nd. Izhar, 3rd. Hebron, 4th. Uzziel. Now, the children of Amram are mentioned on account of Moses and Aaron; the progeny of Izhar on account of Korah, who rebelled against Moses (Num. xvi. xvii.), and that of Uzziel, on account of his sons Mishaël and Elzaphan, mentioned in Levit. x. 4, 5. But the children of Hebron, although he had sons (Num. iii. 27), are not introduced because they act no conspicuous parts in the Pentateuch; for this appears to have been the guiding principle in the compilation of the Biblical genealogies.

23. *The wife of Aaron, Elisheba* (Septuagint, Ἐλισαβήτ), is, according to Ebn Ezra, mentioned as *the mother of priesthood* (see Numb. xx. 25; xxv. 13), whilst Jochebed is *the mother of prophecy*.

25. About Pinchas see Numb. xxv. 11—13.

26. *These are that Aaron and Moses, to whom God, etc.* With these words

fathers of the Levites according to their families. 26. These *are that* Aaron and Moses, to whom the Lord said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their ¹hosts. 27. These *are* they who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt: these *are that* Moses and Aaron.—28. And it came to pass on the day *when* the Lord spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, 29. That the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, I am the Eternal: speak thou to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to thee. 30. And Moses said before the Lord, Behold, I *am* of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken to me?

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Armies.

the narration returns easily to verse 13, where it was interrupted for the insertion, of the genealogy of the legislator, and his brother, the first pontifical dignitary. This is naturally done with a certain emphasis—(these are that Aaron and Moses; these are they that spoke to Pharaoh; these are that Moses and Aaron, ver. 26, 27), but without “grandiloquy,” or pride. It is strange to observe that this passage, and especially the simple personal pronouns “he” and “they” have been made to serve as proofs against the authenticity of the Pentateuch; for, says Clericus, “they could not have been used by Moses, if he had spoken of himself,” and Vater remarks: “Thus an author writes only of men who lived long before his time.” But we need scarcely remind our readers that our text naturally points with some stress to Moses and Aaron, on whose account alone the genealogy had been inserted; and those words mean simply: this is the descent of Moses and Aaron, who were now sent to Pharaoh; and they correspond precisely with verses 13, 14, thus returning to the commencement of the parenthetical list, and indicating its conclusion.—In our verse, which finishes the *genealogy*, Aaron is named before Moses, being the *elder* brother; but in verse 27, which forms the transition to the *history*, Moses has precedence before Aaron, being superior in *dignity* and im-

portance; and thus the former order is observed in all genealogical accounts (Num. iii. 1; xxvi. 59); the latter, everywhere else, where they are henceforth mentioned together. Ebn Ezra’s remark, “Aaron is here mentioned first, because he prophesied to the Israelites before Moses,” is, therefore, unfounded.—*According to their hosts*, that is, obviously, the tribes and their families, which, on the journeys, marched in separate bodies.

28—30. The 28th verse is to be connected with the following; and Rashi already objects to the masoretical separation of both verses. Ebn Ezra finds it likewise surprising, without, however, venturing a decisive opinion on the subject. The explanation of Rosenmüller, who is desirous to accommodate himself to the traditional division: “And this event—namely, that Moses and Aaron spoke to Pharaoh (ver. 27)—took place on the day when God exhorted Moses to his mission (ver. 28); *for* the Lord spoke (ver. 29);” this explanation is ungrammatical and illogical.—The following address of God is the same as that contained in ver. 11, as the objections of Moses in ver. 30 are, with slight alterations, identical with those of ver. 12; and this repetition serves merely to the harmony of the style.—*I am the Eternal* stands here with the same emphasis: “I am the eternal and immutable accomplisher of my promises,” as in vers. 2 and 8.

CHAPTER VII.

AND the Lord said to Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. 2. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee; and Aaron thy brother shall speak to Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. 3. And I shall harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. 4. But Pharaoh ¹will not hearken to you, ²and I shall lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth my ³hosts, ⁴my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt, by great judgments. 5. And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* ⁵the Eternal, when I shall stretch forth my hand upon

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Shall.² That I may lay.³ Armies.⁴ And my people.⁵ The Lord.

1, 2. These verses contain the direct answer to the objection raised by Moses in the last verse of the preceding chapter: that he shall not himself speak before Pharaoh, but his eloquent brother Aaron, to whom he shall suggest the ideas imparted to him by God Himself, and who will thus be his spokesman, whilst he will stand to Aaron as well as to Pharaoh in the relation of a God—exactly as it was expressed in iv. 16: “and he shall indeed be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God” (see our note there); but the power and influence of Moses were not limited to Aaron alone, but extended over Pharaoh also. It is, therefore, evident that *prophet* in our verse is identical in meaning with *mouth* in the passage just quoted, and that it is to be taken in its original etymological meaning of *spokesman*. God reveals His will to mankind through the mouth of a prophet who speaks out the thoughts disclosed to him; just so should Moses use Aaron as the expounder of his ideas. Compare Jeremiah xv. 19; *Virgil*, *Æn.* iv. 378; *Philo* iv. p. 116: “For a prophet speaks no thoughts of his own, but those of another, who suggests them to him.” Nor can, from this point of view, the signification of “*as a god*”

be doubtful: Moses shall act with regard to Pharaoh, and dictate with regard to Aaron, as the direct representative and messenger of God, and in His name and authority.—Many interpreters believing the designation “as a god” too sublime for a human being of even the exalted morality of Moses, have vaguely paraphrased that word; so Targum Onkelos and Saadiah render “master”; Jonathan, “Formidable to Pharaoh as if thou wert his God”; Rashi, “His superior and master, authorised to punish him with plagues and afflictions”; Ebn Ezra, “Angel.”

2. *Thou shalt speak*, namely, to Aaron. —*And Aaron, thy brother, shall speak to Pharaoh*: “And thy brother Aaron shall convey to Pharaoh thy ideas in adorned and captivating speech” (*Rashi*).—“Although Aaron is not always mentioned when Moses went to Pharaoh, it is understood, that both repaired to him always together” (*Ebn Ezra*).

3. *And I shall harden Pharaoh's heart*. See our note on iv. 21.

4. *And I shall lay my hand*, i. e., as Targum Onkelos renders: “The plague of my power,” or my severe plagues.

5. From the nature of the plagues which I shall bring over Egypt, they

Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them.—6. And Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded them; so they did. 7. And Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three years old, when they spoke to Pharaoh.

8. And the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, 9. When Pharaoh will speak to you, saying, Show a miracle for you: then thou shalt say to Aaron, Take thy

will know that only a being of such attributes as are implied in my holy name, i. e., that only the God of the Israelites, has inflicted them upon their land. Thus the Egyptians will perceive and acknowledge their infatuation, with which they had formerly denied the God of Israel, the Lord of the universe, however different such knowledge of God, forced upon them by fear and punishment, might be from the ready belief of pious minds. We have therefore translated *Jehovah* here also *the Eternal*, not the Lord; besides the section from vi. 2 to vii. 7, belongs together (see on vi. 10).

6. And Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded them. Henceforth all hesitation and diffidence on the part of Moses and Aaron ceased, and they now applied themselves confidently to the execution of their great charge.—Ebn Ezra connects these words with the following wonders performed by Moses and Aaron on the behest of God. See, however, on vi. 10.—*So they did*, an emphatical repetition, expressing their zeal and readiness in fulfilling the divine commands.

7. Moses was eighty, and Aaron eighty-

three years old, when they appeared before Pharaoh. These are valuable dates of the highest importance for the chronological arrangement of this whole period of the Hebrew history. An octogenarian might appear too far advanced in years to possess sufficient physical strength or mental energy for the arduous duties he was to perform, and the unusual privations he was to endure. But Moses was in every respect of such an extraordinary and almost exceptional organization, he was of a nature so infinitely superior to the common mass, that he cannot be measured after the usual standard. A man who framed, in a dark age, laws destined to guide mankind to the remotest generations, must even constitutionally have possessed a greater vigourousness than is ordinarily allotted to man. From this point of view, it is even scarcely necessary to urge, that God miraculously strengthened him as His chosen instrument and His greatest prophet, or that he had led a life calculated to preserve the inborn strength, first in the splendour of an Egyptian court, and afterwards in the simplicity of pastoral pursuits

CHAPTER VII. 8 TO VIII. 11.

SUMMARY.—The ten plagues are preceded by the sign, that the staff of Aaron was converted into a serpent, devouring the serpents of the Egyptian magicians, which they produced with their staffs by help of their secret arts (vii. 8—12). But Pharaoh persisted in his obstinacy; and God inflicted therefore upon Egypt the first plague: all the water of the country, even that preserved in vessels, was turned into *blood*, the fish in the Nile died, the water of the river itself became undrinkable, and the inhabitants were compelled to dig for wells, yielding, in Egypt, generally very distasteful and unwholesome water. But when the

¹staff, and cast *it* before Pharaoh, *and* it shall become a serpent. 10. And Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, and they did so as the Lord had commanded: and Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. 11. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the Egyptian ²interpreters of secret signs, they also did in the like manner with their ³hidden arts. 12. For they cast down every

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Rod.² Magicians.³ Enchantments.

magicians likewise converted, by their arts, some water into blood, Pharaoh despised the request of Moses (ver. 13—25). Seven days after the first plague, therefore, God covered the whole land of Egypt with *frogs*, which, forsaking their natural element, the water, penetrated into “the houses, the bed-chambers, ovens, and kneading troughs,” tormenting the Egyptians with their noise and their fetid smell. And as the magicians, although they contrived to produce frogs, were unable to remove them, Pharaoh, with mortified pride, requested Moses to pray to the Lord for deliverance from the plague, promising to permit the departure of the Israelites. On the fervent prayer of Moses the plague ceased on the following day (vii. 26 to viii. 11).

8. From this verse the narrative, which had been at a standstill from vi. 10, steadily and interestingly proceeds with facts and events, directly leading to the aim of Moses’ mission, the redemption of the Israelites from Egypt.

9. Even if Pharaoh should be more inclined to listen to your request, not saying, “Who is the Lord, that I should hearken to his voice” (v. 2), or “Go to your burdens” (v. 4), he will naturally demand signs for yourselves, to accredit yourselves as God’s messengers, as a proof that you are really deputed by a powerful and eternal being; the more so, as even the Israelites required such evidence of their being the true delegates of God.—The staff, which Aaron is ordered to take, is certainly the staff of Moses, which he possessed already in the desert of Sinai (iv. 2), and which he took with him when he returned to Egypt (iv. 20).

11. Already Targum Jonathan mentions the names of the two chief Chartumim, namely, Jannes (*Ἰαννῆς*), and Jambros (Mamre, *Ἰαμβροῦς*, 2 Tim. iii. 8). Jannes and Jambres were called by the Mohammedans *Sadur* and *Gadur* (Koran, vii. 116). The words “enchanters,” and “with their incantations,” here used

with reference to the Chartumim, are evidently intended to characterise the arts of the latter as contemptible acts of clerical imposition, whilst the epithet *wise men*, does not enhance their dignity, as the words signifying knowledge, or wisdom, are, in the Semitic languages, used in connection even with poisoners, jugglers, and all individuals who were considered to possess more knowledge than the common mass of the people, whatever the nature of that knowledge might be. The sense is, therefore: although the Egyptian magicians had, likewise, the power of converting staffs into serpents, they owed it to demoniac and pernicious arts, whilst Moses and Aaron possessed it as a gift of the Most High, and, therefore, easily conquered their idolatrous and superstitious rivals. See ver. 12, and *Josephus*, Antiq. II. xiii. 3.

12. The magicians threw down their staffs (which they carried always as a sign of their clerical dignity, as the Roman augurs bore the *lituus*, a crooked staff without knots: Liv. i. 18; compare *Cicero* De Divin. i. 17); they were also converted into serpents—but these were swallowed by the serpents of Aaron (not

man his ¹staff, and they became serpents: but Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs. 13. And ²the heart of

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Rod.

² He hardened Pharaoh's heart.

"their staffs were devoured by the staff of Aaron," as Rashi and others believe). Thus a certain degree of power and skill is here attributed to the Egyptian priests, although decidedly inferior to that bestowed by God on Moses and Aaron. It cannot be denied that the Pentateuch considers miracles performed, apparently not in the name of the God of Israel, but under the fancied influence of other deities, as not impossible, and that it admits even predictions, which might be realised, and which are called "*false signs*," only because they are given in a bad cause, and for an objectionable purpose; see especially, Deut. xiii. 2—6; compare Matt. ix. 34; xii. 24; xxiv. 24. In a similar light the performances of the Egyptian magicians, in our passage, and on succeeding occasions, are undoubtedly to be viewed; they are, in a certain manner, likewise to be considered as miracles; the magicians are not bare impostors, nor are their performances mere deceitful tricks, but these miracles were of a lower order; for how could Moses hope to make an impression upon the king by the *same* signs? However, if we admit a certain power of the magicians, we reject, most unconditionally, from the notions of the Pentateuch, all interference of "evil spirits," which would thus be endowed with a power independent of that of God. All wisdom and might emanates from Him; nothing is more preposterous, and more at variance with the nature of the ONE God who fills the universe, than the idea of a sharing of His power with other, however subordinate, spirits; and if, therefore, idolators or false prophets are sometimes endowed with supernatural gifts, it is the God of Israel alone who bestows them from inscrutable reasons, and no other superior being; for there exists none besides Him. And yet, even recent commentators have repeated such monstrous opinions. Gerlach remarks: "We find among many

heathen nations, in the service of their false religions, a certain art of conjuration, in which, certainly, the application of secret powers of nature, and cunning, have a large share, but which, no doubt, stand under the influence of evil spirits." (!) And Scott writes: "They, who reverence the Scriptures, will hardly deny, that many of the magicians had *a real intercourse with evil spirits* (sic!), and, *by their help*, actually made discoveries, and produced effects beyond the reach or power of human sagacity We cannot, indeed, in general assign exact bounds to the power of evil spirits, who, when permitted, seem capable of anything which created beings can do." Similarly, even Clarke.—On the other hand, we have already observed on iv, 4, that the art of taming serpents to such a point, that they, at the command of their masters, alternately become stiff like sticks, and resume their natural forms, was much practised in Egypt and the whole Orient; and is still carried on in our time. We read in the "Description de l'Egypte" (i. p. 159): "The serpent Haje, is that sort of reptile which the jugglers of Cairo know best how to turn to account; they tame it, and teach it a great number of tricks more or less extraordinary; they can, as they say, *change the Haje into a stick*, and make it appear like dead. After some preparations it seems, indeed, to assume these forms." The mystery which hangs round this subject, has not yet been quite dispelled. The art of conjuring serpents is hereditary in certain families. The charmers travel, in great numbers, through towns and villages, allure, by different contrivances, the serpents which are hidden in the secret recesses of the houses, and seize them by various artifices. They are safe against their bite, to such a degree that they not only allow them to creep around their bodies, but provoke them even to anger. Without

Pharaoh remained hardened, and he hearkened not to them, as the Lord had said.

ocular perception they smell the presence of serpents by their strong exhalation, and the latter follow the artificial sounds which the conjurors apply to attract them. We further insert the following account of Lane (*Modern Egypt*, ii. p. 230), as that of an accurate and calm recent observer: "As the serpent seeks the darkest place in which to hide himself, the charmer has, in most cases, to exercise his skill in an obscure chamber, where he might easily take a serpent from his bosom, bring it to the people without the door, and affirm that he had found it in the apartment, for no one would venture to enter with him after having been assured of the presence of one of these reptiles within: but he is often required to perform in the full light of day, surrounded by spectators, and incredulous persons have searched him beforehand, and even stripped him naked, yet his success has been complete. He assumes an air of mystery, strikes the walls with a short palm-stick, whistles, makes a chuckling noise with his tongue, and spits upon the ground, and generally says: 'I adjure you by God, if ye be above, or if ye be below, that ye come forth: I adjure you by the most great name, if ye be obedient, come forth; and if ye be disobedient, die! die! die!' The serpent is generally dislodged by his stick, from a fissure in the wall, or drops from the ceiling of the room. I have often heard it asserted that the serpent-charmer, before he enters a house in which he is to try his skill, always employs a servant of that house to introduce

one or more serpents; but I have known instances in which this could not be the case; and am inclined to believe that the darweeshes above-mentioned are generally acquainted with some real physical means of discovering the presence of serpents, without seeing them, and of attracting them from their lurking-places."—J. D. Michaelis observes, that the magicians probably applied a certain kind of serpents, which have the appearance of a stick as long as they do not move, but which naturally become manifest as serpents, if thrown to the ground. Modern travellers have considerably increased our knowledge concerning these extraordinary feats; and if we compare their almost unanimous accounts, we must come to the conclusion that the minds of the conjurors were, during their operations, in the highest possible state of excitement and enthusiasm, and that a cool and deliberate imposition is out of the question. Detailed and interesting descriptions will be found in *Shaw*, *Travels*, p. 354; *Niebuhr*, *Travels*, i. 189; *Déscription de l'Egypte*, viii. 108, xviii. 1, 333; *Quatremère*, *Mém. sur l'Egypte*, i. 202; *Minutoli*, *Travels*, p. 226; *Hengstenberg*, *Mos. and Eg.* p. 97—103.

13. The tyrant's wounded pride darkened still more the blindness of his intellect; carried away by his fatal infatuation he ruined himself and his country by the plagues, which the hand of the Almighty now inflicts upon him. However, before entering upon the explanation of those punishments individually, we deem it advisable to premise

A GENERAL SURVEY OF THE TEN PLAGUES.

THE picture which the inspired writer draws of the plagues of Egypt, and which he executes with uncommon care and exactness, is deeply interesting in more than one point of view. It represents the grand and imposing struggle between the boundless power of the Omnipotent, and the refractory pride of a demented prince; between the wisdom of the fountain of knowledge, and the boasting vanity of the frail human intellect; between the Lord of the universe and the idols of a heathen country; in a word, it depicts the eternal struggle of Truth against Error, of Monotheism against

Paganism. That in this unequal combat divine omnipotence gained an easy victory over mortal impotence, and that Truth triumphed over Fallacy, is as natural and obvious as the fact, that Moses, the humble agent and instrument of the Lord, although, as a mere medium, he disappears almost in the narrative, obtains in the reader's mind the superiority over the haughty magicians and their presumptuous conceit. But that God inflicted ten successive plagues to break the king's contumacy, whilst he might have annihilated him with one mighty stroke, shows that God mercifully tried to convince and move the tyrant by less dangerous visitations, calculated merely to impress him with some idea of the unlimited means at His command; and only when Pharaoh's obstinacy grew more and more inveterate, the number and formidable character of the plagues were increased. And as in the hand of Providence *every* event becomes a means to a higher aim, the miseries which befell Pharaoh in consequence of his own obduracy, were at the same time intended by God to manifest to all the nations of the earth His supreme power, and to induce them to abandon their idolatrous worship, and to acknowledge His exclusive sovereignty. "But only for this cause have I let thee exist, in order to show thee my power, and that my name be acknowledged throughout all the earth" (ix. 16; x. 1, 2, etc.). We cannot therefore see, as Wilson does, in such passages any "proof, that the ancient Jews had no scruples as to the question of fair-dealing with Pharaoh; that the latter can only be viewed as an anvil for the strokes of the divine hammer, and that we are not to look for a high order of ethics in the Biblical times." Such deductions are the unavoidable result of a system of interpretation, in which superficial declamation and inveterate prejudice take the place of patient research and unbiassed examination.

Now, if we analyze the nature of the plagues as narrated in our text, we cannot but acknowledge the *miraculous character* with which all, without exception, are stamped; and the efforts of many scholars (as especially of Eichhorn in his treatise: "de anno mirabili Ægypti"), who took pains to explain those visitations as natural phenomena, have proved signally unsuccessful, futile, and often ludicrous. Conscientious and unprejudiced commentators will deferentially abstain from forcing their own preconceived notions into the simplicity of the sacred text, which alone can form a safe basis for an authentic interpretation; they will modestly declare themselves to be the mere echo of tradition. It is sufficient in the exposition of ancient works, to trace and develop the probable meaning which the author intended to convey. It is not always feasible to form an exact judgment on the nature and value of the facts and ideas communicated: a task, which the commentator may with propriety leave to every reader individually after having put him in possession of all materials necessary to arrive at a well-established opinion. However, it is, on the other hand, easily discernible that all these plagues are *based* upon natural circumstances or phenomena of Egypt; we know that the Nile indeed assumes annually a red colour at a certain season; that generally immediately after this time, the slime of the river breeds a vast number of frogs; that the air is filled with swarms of tormenting insects; and after the same analogy in all other plagues; and the reader will find in the following remarks on these inflictions the necessary natural-historic accounts bearing on the subject, and affording many points of comparison between the narrative of the holy text and the observations of geographers and travellers. In fact, the whole force of the following narrative will be lost to those, who read it without reference to the natural condition of Egypt; whereas a careful regard to this point will interestingly illustrate both the admirable climax of the punishments of Pharaoh and the truthfulness and authenticity of the descriptions. But the miraculous character of those phenomena is unmistakeably observable in the following points: 1. They take place at a time contrary to their usual occurrence; 2. They happen within a space of a few months in rapid succession, whilst at least some of them are of very rare occurrence

(see notes to the 8th and 9th plagues); 3. Their injurious character is infinitely aggravated; as, for instance, by the first plague not only the water of the Nile is converted into blood, but also all its numerous fishes die; 4. They occur at the time predicted by Moses and at his command; 5. They generally cease at his prayer; and 6. The Egyptians only are afflicted by them, whilst the Israelites are exempted from their calamitous effects (see viii. 18; ix. 4, 6, 26; x. 23; xii. 12, *et cact.*). Perhaps the number even of the plagues is not insignificant, as ten is in the Old Testament the number of *perfection* (see note on xx. 1—14); and the ten plagues which freed Israel from the yoke of Egypt's king, may be contrasted with the ten commandments, by which Israel accepted the sovereignty of God.

The *order*, arrangement and successive gradation of the ten dispensations have been made the subject of minute examination on the part of Jewish commentators. So observes Rashbam (on vii. 26), that always two plagues are preceded by their announcement, whilst the third takes place without previous warning. Thus Moses announces the blood and the frogs, the gnats he does not threaten; beetles and pestilence are introduced with a caution to Pharaoh, and boils not; the same is the case with the hail and the locusts on the one hand, and with darkness on the other. Abarbanel finds a still more artificial harmony in the external execution of the nine first plagues: *a*) The first, fourth, and seventh are prefaced by the words: "Go before Pharaoh early in the morning"—and are announced to Pharaoh and his court; *b*) The second, fifth, and eighth are only preceded by the words: "Go to Pharaoh"—and are predicted to Pharaoh alone and secretly; and *c*) The third, sixth and ninth are not announced at all—and were at once executed before the Egyptian people.—The same commentator observes (on viii. 16), that according to the Biblical relation three wonders—blood, frogs and gnats—were performed by Aaron; three others—hail, locusts and darkness—by Moses; and three—beetles, pestilence and death of the first-born—by God himself, without the medium of Moses and Aaron; and one—boils—by Moses and Aaron together (compare Ebn Ezra on viii. 12, and Cusari i. 83). He further maintains, that the five first plagues were produced by the two grosser elements, water and earth; the five latter by the two light elements, fire and air; namely, blood and frogs by the water; the next three, gnats, beetles and pestilence by the earth; the following two, boils and hail, by fire (ix. 10—23); and locusts, darkness and death of the first-born by the air.—Rabbi Jehudah Halevi (quoted by Ebn Ezra on ix. 1) considers more rationally the six last plagues from pestilence, as the effects of an infected air, only admitting the co-operation of fire in the seventh plague (that of hail).—The uninterrupted climax in the terrific nature of the plagues has always been pointed out and explained in the following commentary. We will here but briefly consider the successive effects, which these miracles produced on the hard-heartedness of Pharaoh.—When Moses first requested the king, to grant to the oppressed people of Israel but a few days' leave for the celebration of a religious festival, he was met with the insulting reply: "Who is God, that I should listen to his voice, and let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go," and the burdens of Israel were enhanced instead of being alleviated. Nor had the wonder of the staff transformed into a serpent any effect on the obstinacy of the king, as his wise men exhibited a similar performance, and the circumstance, that the serpent of Moses devoured the serpents of his councillors, was to him but a proof that the art of Moses was, in some degree, more developed, but not of a different or higher order. As little influence had the first plague, the transmutation of the water of the Nile into blood; for this also was imitated by the Chartumim, although they were, on the other hand, unable to restore the sound water of the Nile. After seven days follows the second plague; frogs fill, with their loathsome presence, all houses and apartments; the learned of Egypt also certainly produce these animals, but they cannot remove them,

and Pharaoh is now forced, for the first time, to humiliate himself so far as to implore, through Moses, the assistance of the God of Israel, whom he had shortly before derided as an illusion and a nonentity (viii. 4), and to promise the departure of the Israelites for the purpose represented by Moses. But he scarcely saw himself delivered from the mischief of the frogs, when he unscrupulously retracted his solemn permission. The next plague, that of the gnats, reduced the antagonists of Moses to a more difficult position. Even the sorcerers confessed: "this is the finger of God;" for they were even not able to produce these insects, much less to remove them (viii. 15); yet Pharaoh persevered in his contumacy. The fourth plague—the beetles—forced from Pharaoh the permission that Israel might sacrifice to their God *in Egypt*. But when Moses represented to him that they would not be safe from the religious fanaticism of the Egyptian people, if they killed animals held in sacred veneration by the latter, Pharaoh gave the hypocritical promise, to allow their departure into the desert, with the restriction, however, not to proceed too far from the Egyptian frontier (verse 24); and although Moses was fully convinced of Pharaoh's insincerity (verse 25), he prayed to God to let the plague cease, which, in fact, disappeared immediately. More destructive and more fatal chastisements, were now accumulated against Pharaoh; a pestilence annihilated the greatest part of the Egyptian cattle, whilst that of the Israelites remained uninjured—but Pharaoh persisted in his obstinacy. More dreadful than all preceding calamities was the sixth plague, that of boils; it was no longer directed against the property, but the persons of the Egyptians; and what caused still greater horror was the circumstance that the ulcerating boils covered even the pure bodies of the scrupulously cleanly priests, a fact which the text expressly mentions (ix. 11). But even this punishment exercised no effect upon Pharaoh's conduct. A terrible hail-storm followed, accompanied with torrents of rain, and crashing thunder, and fearful lightnings; the unbridled fury of the elements, before unheard of in Egypt, killed men and beasts in the fields, and destroyed every herb and every tree, and annihilated the earlier crops, as flax and barley—Goshen alone, the abode of the Israelites, remained exempt from all these inflictions. They were, certainly, so overpowering, that Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron before him, and confessed: "I have sinned this time; God is just, but I and my people are wicked" (ix. 27); he requested them to pray for him, and promised again to allow the departure of the Israelites. However, when he was released from this plague also, he hardened his heart as before. But although all these chastisements had apparently remained fruitless to reform *Pharaoh's* mind, they exercised a powerful influence upon the feelings of the Egyptian people, who began to see the power of the Lord, and to acknowledge it; for already at the seventh plague, a great part had followed the warning, to drive the cattle from the fields into the houses, before the commencement of the hail-storm; and when Moses now announced, as a new plague, the infliction of formidable, unparalleled swarms of devastating locusts, the people urged the king to submissiveness, reproachfully warning him: "Dost thou not yet know that Egypt is ruined?" (x. 7). But when Moses insisted upon the departure of the *whole* people, with their wives and children, and all their cattle, Pharaoh felt, as an undoubted fact, what he had hitherto but vaguely guessed, namely, that the sacrifices in the desert were only used as a pretext to conceal the plan of a total emigration from Egypt; and shunning the idea of voluntarily depriving himself of the services of so many vigorous and active labourers, he expelled Moses and Aaron from his presence (verse 11). The east-wind brought the threatened numberless locust swarms; in a short time they converted the flourishing fields of Egypt into deserted tracts; the horrors of a famine glared in the face of the unhappy country; then Pharaoh called once more Moses and Aaron, and confessed: "I have sinned against the Lord your God, *and against you*" (x. 16). Moses prayed to God; a west-wind rose, and buried the hosts of the locusts in the Red Sea—but Pharaoh hardened his heart anew. The ninth plague ensued, more calculated to fill the minds

of the Egyptians with awe and terror, than to cause actual destruction; but it was a worthy preparation for the terrible visitation which still awaited the unfortunate people, and which should, at last, break the king's contumacy. After Pharaoh had permitted the people to depart, with their wives and children, only wishing to keep back their cattle as a pledge of their return, and after Moses had determinedly rejected this proposal, the king took the firm and unshaken resolution rather to suffer extreme ruin than to lose a nation of useful slaves; he forbade Moses, on punishment of death, ever again to appear before him, and, after the latter had predicted to him the last calamity, the death of all first-born of man and cattle, he left the king, in high excitement at his refractoriness. In the night of the 14th of the month of Nisan, pestilence raged with awful havoc in Egypt; Pharaoh, shaken and terrified by the death of so many, and of the most respected of his people, and of so numerous sacred animals, again called Moses and Aaron; he pressed the people to depart without delay—and the Israelites went laden with rich treasures, from a country which had been to them, for centuries, "an iron furnace of misery." But scarcely had the proud heart of Pharaoh recovered from the first terror, when he publicly repented his untimely compliance; he condemned it as abject weakness; and, at the head of his formidable and well-practised army, he pursued the Israelites to the Red Sea; and the king and his hosts were devoured by the roaring depths.—This is a brief outline of the grand struggle between a proud king and the Lord of Heaven and Earth; between the fear and obduracy of a heart in which the germ of sin had taken too deep roots to be eradicated without the most unusual moral energy, and it was this moral energy which the haughty monarch could not command. But Moses appears already, in that skilfully delineated picture, as a devoted servant of God, full of humility and modesty, but also distinguished by skill and intrepidity.

14. And the Lord said to Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuseth to let the people go. 15. Go to Pharaoh in the morning—behold, he goeth out to the

FIRST PLAGUE. BLOOD. VER. 14—25.

14. God gives Moses the command for the first plague (ver. 14—18), distinctly stating the reason, because "Pharaoh's heart is hardened."

15. *Lo, he goeth out to the water*, namely, the Nile. It is known, that it was customary with the kings of Egypt in June and July, when the Nile rises, to repair, in pompous procession, to the river, to convince themselves how many degrees it had risen: for the due increase of the Nile in that season is the only guarantee for a fruitful year and an abundant harvest. Ebn Ezra and others believe, therefore, that it was for this occasion that Pharaoh went to the Nile. But the first wonder took place in the beginning of the year (see on ver. 20), when the rising of the Nile could not, in natural course, be expected. Besides,

the same phrase is used in the announcement of the fourth plague a considerable time later (viii. 16), where the same commentator explains: "It is the custom of the kings to walk in the morning at the river's side, for the sight of the water is wholesome to the eyes": similar to the remark of Rashbam on our passage: "he went out, as distinguished personages use to do, to take a walk or a ride." Either this was the reason of Pharaoh's visit to the Nile, or the intention to bathe (ii. 5), or, which is as probable, to offer to the Nile, which was worshipped with divine honours, the ordinary morning-sacrifice; and it would imply a peculiar point and force to suppose, that the true God manifested His power on the Nile, just when Pharaoh intended to do homage to the false deity. The Nile was in many parts

water—and thou shalt stand by the river's brink ¹before him; and the ²staff which was turned into a serpent shalt thou take into thy hand. 16. And thou shalt say to him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath sent me to thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the desert: and behold, hitherto thou wouldst not hear.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Against he come.

² Rod.

of Egypt worshipped as a God from the remotest times; he had a magnificent temple in Nilopolis; Herodotus (ii. 90) speaks of the priests of the Nile; it was a very ancient opinion, that the Nile is identical with Osiris, that it is the supreme deity of the land, and that it is the *rival of heaven*, since it watered the country without the aid of clouds or rain (compare Herod. ii. 111). Ancient writers, as well as the monuments, testify to these facts. Even now the Nile is called by the Moslems "the most holy river," in acknowledgment of the paramount benefits it bestows by fertilizing the country.—Moses was to stand before Pharaoh, so that he could not but meet him, i. e., to await there his arrival. "Moses is ordered to take this opportunity to speak to the king, because he had not free access to the palace," observes Rosenmüller; however, we have proofs of the contrary (see on v. 15), and Moses was to meet Pharaoh at the Nile, in order to perform there the miracles at once before his eyes.

17. *In this thou shalt know that I am the Lord*, evidently with reference to the bold and wanton exclamation of Pharaoh (v. 2): "I know not the Lord."—*Behold, I will smite*, said Moses, the subject being changed.—*And they (the waters) shall be turned into blood*. Rosenmüller remarks: "They shall assume a red colour, so that they have the appearance of blood," as in Joel iii. 4: "And the moon shall be converted into blood" (so also Gerlach, Hengstenb., and others). But this opinion is utterly inadmissible on account of the effects of that transmutation stated in ver. 18. Besides the poetical diction of a prophet can prove

nothing for the plain historical style of our narrative. From the same reason the analogy of 2 Kings iii. 22, is equally inappropriate: and Josephus (*Antiq.* II., xiv. 2) remarks expressly: "The Egyptian river ran with bloody water at the command of God, insomuch that it could not be drunk;...for the water was not only of the *colour* of blood, but it brought upon those who ventured to drink it great pains and bitter torment" (compare note on iv. 9).—The very first plague manifestly symbolizes the reckless bloodshed of Pharaoh and his ultimate sanguinary punishment, and was thus a most powerful admonition for the king to discontinue his cruelties, and to obey the voice of God's messengers (see Book of Wisdom, xi. 6, 7: "At the sight of the bloody Nile the Egyptians were with horror reminded of Pharaoh's murderous command against the Hebrew children").

18. *And the fish that is in the river shall die*. About the abundance of fish in the Nile we possess the unanimous and most decided testimonials both of ancient and modern geographers and travellers. Diodorus Siculus (i. 36) says: "The Nile abounds in very various kinds of fish in incredible numbers; for it supplies the Egyptians not only with copious food of fresh fish, but enables them to salt quantities for exportation; for which purpose they used fossil salt from the African deserts, not sea salt, which like everything belonging to the sea was abhorred by them." (Compare Num. xi. 5; Isaiah xix. 8; Herod. ii. 93; Strabo xvii. 823). By the dying of the fish, therefore, the Egyptians, who live on them in a great measure, and some classes, and some districts almost exclusively, were deprived

17. Thus saith the Lord, In this thou shalt know that I *am* the Lord. Behold, I will smite with the staff that *is* in my hand upon the waters which *are* in the river, and they shall be turned into blood. 18. And the fish that *is* in the river shall die, and the river shall be offensive in smell; and the Egyptians shall loathe to drink of the water of the river. 19. And the Lord spoke to Moses,

of a very important portion of their subsistence. This physical infliction was greatly enhanced by a more spiritual, religious mortification; for "the river was offensive in smell"; the Nile, which was to them an object of profound worship, (see on ver. 15), was now to be for them an object of abomination: they will fly its vicinity. Even the fish of the Nile were in some degree esteemed sacred. They were in some parts worshipped as deities, and hence the priests scrupulously abstained from eating fish. A third calamity accompanying this plague is the impossibility of drinking the water of the Nile, a vexation the keener felt by them, because the water of the Nile, after having been purified from the slime by a kind of almond-dough is, on the one hand, most agreeable, tasteful and healthy, so that it appears to strangers almost as an artificially prepared drink—whence the Egyptian proverb originated: "the water of the Nile is as sweet as honey and sugar," and the adage, "that if Mohammed had drunk of it, he would have besought God to be immortal, that he might always enjoy it"; and it is, on the other hand, the *only* drinkable water which the inhabitants can possibly use; for, says Maillet (i. p. 20): "The well and cistern-water in Egypt is detestable and unwholesome; fountains are so rare, that they are a kind of prodigy in that country; and as to rain-water, that is out of the question, as scarcely any rain falls in Egypt" (compare *Josephus Antiq.* II. xiv. 1). — *The Egyptians shall loathe*, etc., that is, they will have an aversion to that water, which had always been their delight, and which they were accustomed to consider as a peculiar blessing to the country, not to

be met with in any other part of the globe. Rashi explains less appropriately here in the meaning of: "they will exert themselves in vain to find a remedy for the water of the Nile to make it palatable." Similarly Glaire: "et se fatigueront en vain pour boire." — The Samaritan codex of the Pentateuch has after this verse the words: "And Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, and said to him," and repeats then ver. 16, 17, 18, an explicitness, which, although not against the style of the Pentateuch (see ver. 9—12), is not necessarily demanded by it (see iv. 12, 20—30; vi. 9; vii. 26—29; and viii. 1, 16—19, 20).

19. All the waters of Egypt which were to be turned into blood, are distinctly specified in the following expressions. The Nile divides itself near Kairo into different *arms* and *mouths*, separately flowing into the Mediterranean; and these are the *streams*. The ancients knew seven mouths (*viz.*, the Heracleotic, Balbitic, Sebennitic, Phatnitic or Bucolic, Mendesian, Tanitic, and Pelusian); whence the Nile was called *septemflus* or *septemgeminus* (*Ovid*, *Metamorphoses* xv. 753; *Virgil*, *Æneid*, vi. 800). At present they are partly buried in the sand, and partly they do not contain water throughout the whole year. But tributary rivers the Nile has none, in its whole extent of 1,350 nautical miles; a solitary instance in the hydrographic history of the globe.—From the Nile and its arms the water was, for the purpose of artificial irrigation of the fields, from the earliest times, conducted through the different parts of the country by means of *canals* and *trenches* (Rashi correctly: "canals dug by human

Say to Aaron, Take thy ¹staff, and stretch out thy hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their ²canals, and upon their ponds, and upon all the ³gatherings of water, *that* they may become blood; and *that* there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in *vessels of wood* and in *vessels of stone*. 20. And Moses and

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Rod.

² Rivers.

³ Pools.

hands from the Nile to fertilize the fields"). After the inundation of the Nile there remain near its shores numerous *ponds, marshes, and pools*. This term may also include *the lakes* of Egypt, partly the work of nature, partly artificially formed, serving as great receptacles of water, in which at the rising of the Nile the superfluous water was collected and preserved for future use. Rashi explains justly *stagnant waters*, and adds as a translation: *étangs, lakes*. Such lakes, as those famous under the name of Moeris and Mareotis, are mostly overgrown with reeds, and full of fowl and fish. The *gatherings of water*, lastly, are all wells, and especially water-reservoirs or cisterns, such as are found near houses or mosques. Such a large cistern was formerly in Alexandria, into which the water was led through a canal constructed for the purpose, and which supplied the town with drinkable water throughout the year (see Thevenot i. p. 173).—*Both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone*; and quite so translates Onkelos. The Egyptians keep the water of the Nile in vessels of wood, or more frequently of clay and stone, especially for the purpose of filtration, so necessary in consequence of the many heterogeneous and impure parts it originally contains (*Jerom.* on Isaiah xxiii. 3; *Pococke*, *Orient* i. 312; *Burchhardt*, *Travels* ii. 778). Thus it is emphatically announced, that the water would be converted into blood *throughout all the land of Egypt*, even that which was already in the houses of the Egyptians. The literal translation of the Hebrew words here used is: "in woods and in stones," which is certainly obscure, and would

almost be unintelligible, if we did not consider, that this whole account is written by a native Egyptian, and for a people, every member of which was perfectly familiar with all the customs and usages of that country.

20, 21. In the 20th verse the infliction of the first plague is plainly expressed: *And all the waters in the river were turned into blood*; and in the subsequent verse its effects are as clearly described, perfectly in harmony with ver. 18.—*He lifted up*, namely, Aaron, which the Sept. adds (see ver. 19). Proceeding from the principle laid down as the general character of the Egyptian wonders, that they have a certain obvious connection with apparent natural phenomena, aggrandized to a prodigious extent (see p. 88), we observe, that according to the unanimous descriptions of geographers, the water of the Nile, annually towards the end of the month of June, when the river rises, changes for about twenty days its colour, which is usually dark and almost black (wherefore the Nile is poetically called "the *black river*," Isaiah xxiii. 3;) and assumes a red appearance, which gradually passes into a greenish colour; and thus during this time the water of the Nile has a disagreeable smell, and an unwholesome taste, although it is not always absolutely undrinkable; whilst in some years it is exceedingly loathsome and unhealthy. Similar phenomena are reported of other rivers also; for instance, the Tigris which is said to have streamed with blood; further of the river Adonis (now called Nahar Ibrahim), coming from the Lebanon, which imparts for a considerable distance a red colour even to the sea into which it flows

Aaron did so, as the Lord had commanded; and he lifted up the 'staff', and smote the waters that *were* in the river, before the eyes of Pharaoh, and before the eyes of his servants; and all the waters that *were* in the river were turned into blood. 21. And the fish that *was* in the 'river' died, and the river was offensive in smell, and the

⁴ *Engl. Vers.*—Water.

(*Maundrell*, Trav. p. 35; see also *Vogel's Annals of Leipsic*, p. 460, where it is narrated that the water of the Elster appeared during four days, from the 15th to the 19th of October, 1631, red like blood). *Ehrenberg* found the whole bay of the Red Sea in the vicinity of Mount Sinai appearing like blood, in consequence of cryptogamic plants abounding in that part of the sea. By others the redness is ascribed to the particles of red clay, which the Nile, at its rising, carries with it from Ethiopia (so *Pococke*, *Maillet*, *Maundrell*, *Le Père aîné*), or to the innumerable little red insects which fill the Nile about that season.—Now, the *wonder* recorded in our text consists in the following circumstances: 1. That this event did not take place in June, in natural course, but in the beginning of the year. For the hail mentioned in ix. 31, destroyed the flax and barley. These crops are in Egypt generally ripe for harvest in April; but the rise of the Nile does not begin in so early a part of the year; and certainly the rapid sketch of the plagues delineated in the holy text, obliges us to suppose that all ten inflictions took place in the same year; for they must have followed in quick succession if they were to arouse the undivided attention of the king, and to strike terror into his heart. 2. That the plague took place on the command of God through Moses; 3. That the Nile did not merely assume a red or bloody colour, but was totally converted into blood (see on ver. 17); 4. That all fish died; whilst ordinarily this does not take place at the change of the colour of the Nile (the opinion of *Eichhorn* to the contrary is a perfectly unfounded assertion);

5. That even the water which was in the vessels was affected by the plague (ver. 19); 6. The Israelites enjoyed pure water during the calamity; for, according to ver. 24, the Egyptians only dug after wells; and *Josephus* remarks distinctly: "The water of the Nile was disagreeable and unwholesome to the Egyptians, whilst it was sweet and palatable to the Hebrews, nor in any way different from its natural quality"; and *Targum Jonathan* adds, on ver. 22, that the Egyptian magicians took water *from Goshen* for their experiment; and 7. That the change lasted only seven days, whilst travellers maintain, that it usually extends during twenty days and more. In 1673 it retained the red colour from the beginning of July to the end of December. But *Abarbanel*, and *Hengstenberg* connect, less probably, ver. 25 closely with ver. 26, and assert that the text simply intimates, that seven days after the beginning of the first plague, concerning the conclusion of which nothing is stated in the text, the second was announced.—Perfectly inadmissible is, therefore, the opinion of *Eichhorn*, that this, like all other signs of Moses, is literally nothing more than the natural annual occurrence; and that Moses, in order to impress Pharaoh with the extraordinary power bestowed upon him by the Almighty God of the Hebrews, took some water from the Nile, changed it by some chemical contrivance into a red colour, and exhorted Pharaoh, that the same God, by whose aid he had now converted the water before him into a bloody fluid, produced every year the similar effect upon all the water of the Nile. But 1. the dying of the fish in the Nile would be inexplicable; 2. this would

Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river, and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. 22. And the Egyptian ¹interpreters of secret signs did so with their ²hidden arts: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not hearken to them, as the Lord had said. 23. And Pharaoh turned and went into his house, neither did he direct his heart to this also. 24. And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink; for they could not drink of the water of the river. 25. And seven

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Magicians.

² Enchantments.

merely have been a harmless and innocuous *sign* (like that related in iv. 9. for the justification of Moses), whilst it is intended as a *plague* (ver. 4); and 3. according to the sacred text not a vessel filled with water, but the whole Nile underwent the fatal change.

22. *And the Egyptian interpreters of secret signs did so, etc.* Ebn Ezra already asks: "From where did the magicians take water for the performance of their experiment, as *all* the water had been converted into blood?" (ver. 20), and he answers, that Aaron changed only the water *above* the earth, not that *beneath* it; and so they might dig for water in the earth, as the Egyptians did for the purpose of finding drinkable water (ver. 24). Besides, there was, in Goshen, the district of the Hebrews, water which was not affected by the plague, and Targum Jonathan says here, distinctly, that the magicians took the water from Goshen; see on ver. 20, No. 6. Others (as Hengstenberg and Gerlach) assert, with less plausibility, that the word *all* (in ver. 20) is not to be taken quite literally. Nor can we accede to the opinion of many interpreters, among whom is Ebn Ezra, that the Hebrews were likewise smitten with the plagues of blood, the frogs, gnats, boils and locusts, "because they were not so dangerous and fatal as the rest." But still they were *plagues*, intended and calculated to terrify and annoy Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and how should the Israelites, in whose favour these punishments were inflicted

upon their adversaries, have suffered the same calamities as the latter? Still less acceptable is the opinion of Clericus, Philippon, and others, that Moses and Aaron, after having converted the water into blood, changed it again into its original condition and colour, in order to afford to the magicians an opportunity for displaying their arts. There is, further, that important and essential difference between the miracles of Moses, and the feats of the magicians, that, whilst the former converted the water of the whole Nile, with all its arms and canals, and permanently changing floods, even where he could not see it, and made it remain in this state for at least seven days (ver. 25); the latter were only able to produce a similar effect upon a very small quantity of stagnant water, which they had before their eyes in a vessel, and which remained so only during the few moments of the experiment, until the king returned home (ver. 23). It is further to be remarked, that although the magicians changed the water into blood, they could not convert the blood again into water.

23. *Neither did he direct his heart to this also*, referring to the first sign of Aaron's serpent devouring the serpents of the magicians.

24. *And the Egyptians digged for water*, not the Hebrews; see on verses 20 (No. 6) and 22. The water, which the Hebrews kept in their own *vessels of wood and vessels of stone* (see on ver. 19), might have remained untouched by the plague,

days were fulfilled after the Lord had smitten the river.

26. And the Lord spoke to Moses: Go to Pharaoh, and say to him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me. 27. And if thou refuse to let *them* go, behold, I shall smite all thy boundaries with frogs. 28. And the river shall teem *with* frogs, and they shall come up and enter into thy house, and into thy bed-chamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy

and this supply probably sufficed for seven days (ver. 25). Thus is easily removed the objection of Drusus (acknowledged by Rosenmüller), why it was necessary to dig after water, if that of the Hebrews was not vitiated, as the latter lived together with the Egyptians in the same districts and towns, in which, therefore, the plague did not prevail, whence it follows, that not the *whole* country was affected by the calamity, against the express words of Moses.—Jonathan, in order to enhance the miracle, adds: “but they did not find clear water.” However it was a sufficient punishment for them to be deprived, during seven days, of the delightful waters of the Nile, and to content themselves with the very disagreeable and thick waters of the Egyptian wells (see ver. 18).

25. *And seven days were fulfilled after the Lord had smitten the river.* These words evidently describe the duration of the first plague, a statement not made with reference to any of the subsequent inflictions. Luther translates here, the most distinctly, (“Und das währte sieben

Tage lang dass der Herr den Strom schlug;”) and Targum Onkelos adds: “and afterwards the word of the Lord remedied the river.” Abarbanel gives, besides, three other explanations: 1st. These words are added to show the refractoriness of Pharaoh, who was not, even by the continuance of the plague during so protracted a time, forced to obedience and humility;—2nd. They indicate the long-suffering of God, who allowed Pharaoh rest during seven days after the first plague, in order to grant him time for reflection and repentance;—3rd. They are to be connected with the following verse: Seven days after the change of the Nile God announced to Pharaoh the second plague: so that the first calamity might have lasted even longer than seven days (compare vi. 28, 29): which interpretation is also adopted by Eichhorn, Hengstenberg, Gerlach, and others, desirous to bring into agreement the natural and usual change of the Nile, generally extending during at least twenty days, with the facts here related; see however, on ver. 20, No. 7.

SECOND PLAGUE. FROGS. VII. 26.—VIII. 11.

26. *Go to Pharaoh*, namely, with thy brother Aaron.

27. *With frogs.* That the animal constituting the second plague cannot be the crocodile, as some Hebrew commentators have maintained is sufficiently explained by Bochart, Hieroz. ii., Book v.2; and, in fact, a plague of crocodiles would have manifested itself in quite a different and a more formidable manner than is

described in our text; it would perfectly destroy the gradual climax of the wonders, and would be appropriate rather as the ninth than as the second plague.

28, 29. *And they shall come up*, namely, from the Nile, which was considered lying lower than the town. —*And in thy ovens.* So great was the number of frogs, that they penetrated into the driest places, which they other-

servants, and upon thy people, and into thy ovens, and into thy kneading-troughs. 29. And the frogs shall come

wise avoid, and in which, if found there by the Egyptians, they must have excited the greatest disgust. The proper baking-ovens which are generally for public use in Oriental cities, are little different from ours. But, in remoter times already, were also used large earthen pots, open at the top, about three feet high. A fire is lighted within, generally with wood; then, if the sides are sufficiently heated, the dough is affixed to them from without, and the aperture above covered. At present, the following is the usual mode of making bread among the Arab tribes which remain for a longer time in the same place: "They make rude ovens by digging a hole about three feet deep, shaping it like a reversed funnel, and plastering it with mud. They heat it by burning brushwood within, and then stick the lumps of dough, pressed into small cakes almost half an inch thick, to the sides, with the hand. The bread is ready in two or three minutes. . . . All Arab bread is unleavened" (*Layard, Discoveries in Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 288). The Samaritan codex has here again unnecessarily, as after verse 18, the words: "and Moses and Aaron came to Pharaoh, and they said to him, Thus speaks the Lord," and then it repeats from verse 26—29.—If we compare the respective effects of the two first plagues, it is evident that the second is of a far more tormenting and calamitous nature. For whilst during the first plague the Egyptians had at least water from the wells, however inferior this is to that of the Nile, the frogs filled not only the rivers and all waters—thus including the first plague—they not only infested the streets and houses of the Egyptians, but they molested even their persons, penetrated into their bed-chambers, and disturbed their sleep. If we add hereto, that, under such circumstances, even the water must have been singularly loathsome; that the whole atmosphere must

have been infected with a fetid smell; that the incessant inharmonious noise dinned perpetually in the ears, allowing them no rest either by day or night; that Pharaoh humbled himself so far as to request Moses and Aaron to pray for the removal of the plague, and to promise the release of the Israelites, and that even the destruction of those animals was attended with a pestilential odour: it will be easily conceived that there is a gradation even in the two first plagues, overwhelming enough to convince even a haughty and obstinate tyrant with what powerful Being he had madly engaged in warfare, and what chastisements were still in reserve against his refractoriness. That frogs can, by their number, become a plague, is confirmed by several ancient writers, as Just. xv. 2, who relates, that the Autariatae were compelled to leave their abodes because the frogs had multiplied to a prodigious amount, and Phœnias, a disciple of Aristotle, writes thus, on a similar case: "In Pæonia and Dardania appeared once, suddenly, such numbers of frogs, that they filled the houses and streets. Therefore, as killing them, or shutting the doors, was of no avail, as even the vessels were full of them, the water infested, and the food uneatable, as they could scarcely set their feet on the ground without treading on heaps of them, and as they were vexed by the smell of the great numbers which died, they fled from that region, as is reported" (*Eustathius* in *Hom. Il. A.* p. 35); compare *Pliny*, viii. 43; *Aelian*, xvii. 41. We subjoin an interesting description of a similar plague, which occurred in Egypt, from *Quatremère*, i. p. 121, who follows an account of *Macrizi*: "In the year 791, and in the subsequent years, the reptiles fatal to books, and wool-stuffs, increased in a miraculous degree. A trustworthy man assured me that these animals ate and spoiled 1,500 pieces of his stuffs, being more than fifteen camel loads. I con-

up both upon thee and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants.

vinced myself, by ocular inspection, that this statement was not exaggerated, and that the worms, in the vicinity of the sea, had destroyed a great quantity of wood and stuffs. I saw, near Matariah, garden-walls quite perforated by these little animals. About the year 821 this plague appeared in the district of Hosainiah, near Kairo. The worms, after having destroyed the provisions, the furniture, etc. which caused to the inhabitants an incalculable loss, attacked the walls of the houses, and gnawed at the wood, and perforated it entirely. The proprietors hastily pulled down the houses, which had remained uninjured by the worms, so that this quarter was almost entirely desolated." From this account we may infer what vexation an excessive quantity of frogs might become; and this plague

is here announced to Pharaoh; and the beginning of the following chapter relates its real occurrence; a punishment no doubt the more grievous to the Egyptians, as, according to some authorities, the frog was one of their sacred animals, although it has not been distinctly ascertained whether this superstition had its cause in their esteem for, or their dislike of that animal. It is, however, certain, that on very ancient hieroglyphic tablets, and on several ancient gems, the frog is represented sitting on the leaf of the sacred *lotus*, as a symbol either of the Nile, or of Osiris, the sun. The frogs stood under the authority of the goddess *Heki*, one of the supreme deities of Egypt, who was, in the time of Herodotus (ii. 155), worshipped in a magnificent shrine in the town Buto.

CHAPTER VIII.

AND the Lord said to Moses, Say to Aaron, Stretch forth thy hand with thy ¹staff over the streams, over the ²canals, and over the ponds, and cause ³the frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt. 2. And Aaron stretched forth his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Rod.

² Rivers.

³ Frogs.

1. See on vii. 19. *Stretch forth thy hand with the staff*; merely as a symbolical sign, that the frogs would come up from the waters of Egypt.

2. *And the frogs came up.* Jonathan concludes the verse with the following remark explanatory of the fact that Aaron, and not Moses performed the first wonders: "But Moses did not smite the river either with blood or frogs, because he had been rescued from it in his infancy, when he was exposed there by his mother."—*And they (the frogs) covered the land of Egypt.* It is universally known, that the Nile and all the waters supplied from it, especially the marshes, are exceedingly prolific in frogs, reptiles, and other organic animals, pro-

duced and fed by the rich and nutritious mud of the river, chiefly at the season when the "Green Nile" gives way to the "Red Nile." Thus the river, even in ordinary years, abounds in frogs, a fact which even our text (vers. 5, 7) mentions as known and acknowledged. One female lays, even in our regions, in the spring, 600 to 1100 eggs. Hasselquist (p. 254) reports, that at present also the inhabitants of Egypt are not unfrequently visited by an enormous increase of frogs, which torment them by their intrusion and their shrieking and yelling (see also Sonnini, iii. p. 365). But generally these animals are to a great extent destroyed by serpents, crocodiles, and storks, and this is one of the reasons, why the Ibis is

came up, and covered the land of Egypt. 3. And the ¹interpreters of secret signs did so with their ²hidden arts, and brought up the frogs upon the land of Egypt. 4. Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Entreat the Lord, that He may take away the frogs from me, and from my people, and ³I shall willingly let the people go, that they may sacrifice to the Lord. 5. And Moses said

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Magicians.

² Enchantments.

³ I will let.

revered as a sacred benefactor. But the facts related in our text manifest themselves as a miracle in the following points:

1. The frogs came over the land at the command of Moses; 2. They appeared in such unparalleled multitudes, that they molested even the persons of the Egyptians; 3. They left their natural element, the water and its vicinity, and came into the houses and even the driest places (vii. 28); 4. The houses and persons of the Israelites were exempted from the plague (a fact evident from vii. 29, and viii. 5; compare on vii. 22); and 5. The frogs disappeared instantaneously and completely on the prayer of Moses (ver. 9; compare *Bochart*, *Hieroz.* p. 570).—Eichhorn, offering a similar explanation of this plague to that proposed by him with regard to the transmutation of the water of the Nile into blood (see on vii. 20, 21), asserts, that Moses, about the beginning of the month of July, when the frogs usually are so numerous in Egypt, that many of them are compelled to leave the water and to seek food elsewhere, called forth, "by an artifice unknown to us," a quantity of them from a neighbouring pond, assuring Pharaoh, that the same God, by whose assistance he had produced these few frogs, creates annually that vast number of these animals, which infests Egypt; which explanation, however, is not happier than that quoted and criticised on vii. 20, 21, or those ventured by the same critic about the following plagues.—A description of the different kinds of frogs in Egypt will be found in the "*Déscription de l'Égypte*," xxiv. p. 134, *et seq.* The most usual species in that country is the *rana punctata*, the dotted Egyptian frog; it is of ash colour, with green spots; the feet are marked with transverse bands, and the toes are separated to half their length. It is but seldom found in Europe.—In this, as in the following plagues, the humiliation is augmented by the contemptible character of the animals which cause the calamity. We find further therein an analogy to the haughtiness with which the Egyptians looked down upon the Israelites, as unclean creatures (see *Philo Vit. Mos.* i. 619).

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3. And the interpreters of secret signs did so with their hidden arts: they could create and increase the evil, without having the power to effect its removal, which Pharaoh was compelled to demand of Moses. Besides, they produced only a small number of frogs in a little water; and thus, says Ebn Ezra, was Pharaoh convinced that Moses' power was greater than that of the magicians; and he therefore sent for Moses (see, however, on ver. 4). And as regards the remark of Bochart: "It is even uncertain, whether the magicians indeed produced real frogs; perhaps they brought them secretly from other places and gave them out as their own, or imposed upon Pharaoh in any other way by their tricks"; we refer to our note on vii. 12, where we have pointed out the probability, that the *Char-tumim* must, indeed, be considered as standing also under the influence of God.

4. Tormented by the prodigious increase of the frogs, which his wise men had no power to stop, Pharaoh began to be seized by some vague feeling of the superiority of the God of Israel; and in

to Pharaoh, Glory over me! ⁴ For when shall I entreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs from thee and from thy houses, *that* they may remain in the river only? 6. And he said, ⁵ For to-morrow. And he said, *Be it* according to thy word: that thou mayest know that *there is* none like the Lord our God. 7. And the frogs shall depart from thee and from thy

⁴ *Engl. Vers.*—When.

⁵ To-morrow.

his helplessness requested Moses to pray for him to that Deity of which he had but a short time since spoken in terms of contempt and insult (v. 2), and promised in his embarrassment to allow the departure of the Israelites for the purpose of worshipping that same Deity.

5. *And Moses said to Pharaoh, Glory over me! For when shall I entreat for thee?* i. e., I will in this point follow thy command and acknowledge thee as my master, so that thou mayest save the appearance as if *thy will* had removed the plague. This seems to be the sense of these much disputed words, about which a considerable variety of interpretations has been proposed. Targum Onkelos renders: "Ask for thee something great, and fix thou thyself the time"; but it does not appear how that meaning lies in the words of the Hebrew text. The same is the case with the translation of the Septuagint, and with those renderings which agree with that interpretation; the Vulgate, the Syrian and Saadia. Ebn Ezra explains: "I shall give thee glory by praying to the Lord to remove the plague on that day on which thou desirest it"—but thus the imperative, "glory over me!" would be inexplicable.—Rashi interprets a corresponding passage in Isaiah x. 15 perfectly correctly: "Shall the axe boast itself against him who heweth with it, saying, I am greater than thou"? (compare also Judges vii. 2)—but he explains our passage quite differently and strangely, thus: "Procure glory for thyself, by shrewdly asking something which I might not be able to perform"—an interpretation which is partly followed by Philippson,

who explains (like Mendelssohn, Zunz, Van Es, and others): "Gain glory over me; i. e., in order to show the whole extent of the divine power, in whose name I come, I will expose myself to the apparent risk, to pray for the removal of the frogs at any time appointed by thyself; I will thus yield to thee the advantage of incurring the possibility of a failure; try therefore to obtain the glory, thus to confound me; understood in this manner, the exclamation '*glory over me!*' has an infinitely ironical character, which describes most felicitously Moses' consciousness of his superiority and his contempt for Pharaoh"—an irony, however, utterly incompatible with the meek and humble character of the legislator, and ill-suited the quiet and unimpassioned tenor of our narrative; whilst our explanation given above is in perfect harmony with the proverbial modesty of Moses.—See, on the other interpretations of these words, the larger edition.—*That they may remain in the river only*, i. e., in their natural element, and in the usual quantity, but that they may retire from those places where their presence⁶ is obnoxious.

6. As the destruction of all the myriads of frogs was a work of gigantic power, Pharaoh did not require it instantaneously, as might be expected, but for the following day, requesting Moses to pray the same day, that the frogs might die to-morrow; for, says Rashbam, it is not likely that they should all die at once. We need, therefore, not adopt the artificial reason assigned for the procrastination of Pharaoh by Ebn Ezra, that according to the celestial constel-

houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people; they shall remain in the river only. 8. And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh; and Moses cried to the Lord concerning the frogs which He had brought upon Pharaoh. 9. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the

lations the destruction of the frogs would have ensued immediately, that very hour, but that Pharaoh wished to try the power of Moses, whether he was able to *prolong* the plague beyond its natural duration. Our text shows clearly the anguish of Pharaoh, who evidently did not know how long this troublesome vexation might protract itself. Perhaps Pharaoh hoped that the plague might disappear before the following morning, and that he thus might be spared the humiliation of acknowledging the power of God in this infliction.

8. The unhesitating certainty with which Moses had promised the destruction of the frogs—apparently without any special command of God (see ver. 9)—made, as Ebn Ezra observes, the prayer of Moses doubly necessary, and therefore the strong expression, *and Moses cried* is used.—Which he had brought upon Pharaoh. Others explain less appropriately:

“because of the promise concerning the frogs, which he had made to Pharaoh.” Thus Van Es, no doubt following the rendering of the Septuagint and of the Vulgate. So also Glaire: “à cause de la parole qu’il avait donnée à Parhō au sujet des grenouilles.”

9. Courts belonging to the private houses, which signification appears here decidedly preferable to that of *villages*, which the Septuagint, Vulgate, Mendelssohn, and others, adopt, as they are included in the two other localities mentioned in our verse, the houses and fields.

11. Pharaoh, when again freed from the punishment, which had manifested to him in some degree the power of the Almighty, unscrupulously broke the promise he had given to Moses, and hardened again his heart against the exhortation of God’s messenger, *as God had repeatedly predicted* (see iii. 19; iv. 21; vii. 4, 13).

CHAPTER VIII. 12—28.

SUMMARY.—*Third and fourth plague.* Aaron smote the dust with his staff, and all the dust of the land was converted into *gnats*, which the Egyptian magicians endeavoured in vain likewise to produce, and which they were therefore compelled to acknowledge as the work of a superior deity. But when Pharaoh persisted in his obstinacy, God brought a most noxious kind of *beetles* over the land, which, penetrating into the houses, attacked the persons, destroyed all kinds of property, and devastated the fields of the Egyptians; but which neither molested nor injured the Hebrews in Goshen or in any part of the country. Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, requesting them to pray to God for a removal of the insects, and allowing the Israelites to sacrifice in Egypt. But when Moses objected, that they could not, without imminent danger, kill before the eyes of the Egyptians animals, which they worshipped, Pharaoh promised to permit their journey to a little distance into the desert. The plague disappeared—and the faithlessness and obstinacy of Pharaoh returned.

THIRD PLAGUE. GNATS. VER. 12—15.

12. No warning was given to Pharaoh concerning this plague; but it was inflicted immediately after the removal of the frogs, to chastise him more strikingly

¹ courts, and out of the fields. 10. And they gathered them ² in heaps: and the land smelled offensively. 11. But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not to them, as the Lord had said.

12. And the Lord said to Moses, Say to Aaron, Stretch out thy ³ staff, and smite the dust of the land, that it

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Villages.

² Upon.

³ Rod.

for his treacherous vacillation. — Aaron was commanded to *smite the dust of the land* that it may become *kinnim* or *kinnam* (vers. 13, 14), It is a matter of difficulty precisely to determine the species or kind of animals denoted by that expression; but so much is certain: 1. That they must be a very small kind of insects, as they are represented to arise from the grains of dust; 2. That they are noxious both to man and beasts (ver. 13), and in a still higher degree than the frogs. The singular form is used in Isaiah li. 6, where it represents something very frail, weak, and perishable. The etymology leads to the Greek root, *κνᾶω*, to *gnaw* or pinch — and this coincides with the English noun *gnats*, with which, indeed, all the qualities just mentioned perfectly agree. And the Septuagint, which is naturally of great authority in all matters concerning the natural phenomena of Egypt, its home, translates also “mosquito gnats” (*σκηφῆς*); which Philo, likewise an Egyptian, describes thus (Vita Mos. ii. p. 97, Edit. Mang.): “It is an insect although of very small size, yet of a most troublesome nature; for it hurts not only the surface, causing intolerable and protracted itching, but penetrates also into the interior through the ears and noses. It flies even into the eyes of those who do not guard themselves, and produces serious pain,” all which qualities are perfectly applicable to *gnats*, especially if we compare herewith the further descriptions of these animals as given by ancient and modern authors, from which the tormenting character of this plague will be obvious. Herodotus already observes (ii. 95): “Against the gnats, which are very numerous, the Egyptians use

the following means: the inhabitants of Upper Egypt protect themselves by turrets, in which they sleep; for the gnats are unable to rise to any considerable elevation. Those who live near the marshes, take a net, with which they fish by day, spread it over their beds by night, and sleep beneath it; the gnats, which sting through clothes or linen, do not even try to penetrate through the net”; for it is a fact, that mosquitos and other flies will not pass through nets, although the meshes might be more than large enough to enable them to enter. Quite similar precautionary measures against the dangerous stings of the mosquitos are reported by the most recent travellers in Egypt. — Augustin further remarks: “The gnats in Egypt breed in the slime; they are very small flies, but most lively and versatile, not allowing man to rest; if they are scared off, they return with the greater eagerness.” Besides, it is admitted on all hands, that these insects molest especially beasts, as oxen and horses, flying into their eyes and nostrils, driving them to madness and fury, and sometimes even torturing them to death. Theodoret (Histor. Eccl. Libr. ii. cap. 26) mentions, that when Saporcs besieged Nisibis, his horses and elephants were so fearfully tormented by the stings of innumerable gnats, that they broke their yokes in wild fury, and ran madly about in all directions. They are, chiefly in seasons of a cool atmosphere, a perfect plague, rendering both eating and sleeping almost impossible. These descriptions would well agree with the *culex raptans* of Linné, or the *culex molestus* of Forskal. — But it is evident from all this, that the traditional

may become ¹gnats throughout all the land of Egypt. 13. And they did so, for Aaron stretched out his hand with his ²staff, and smote the dust upon the earth, and ³the gnats were on man and on beast; all the dust of the land became gnats through all the land of Egypt. 14. And the interpreters of secret signs did so with their hidden arts, to bring forth gnats, but they could not: so there were gnats upon man and upon beast. 15. And the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Lice.

² Rod.

³ It became lice in man, and in beast.

acceptation of *kinnim* as *lice*, which is adopted by Josephus, Jonathan, Onkelos, Hesychius, Dioscorides, Taylor, Buxtorf, Le Clerc, and Luther, and defended—but with insufficient arguments—by Bochart and Bryant, is in no way appropriate, whilst the translations of Zunz and Arnheim (*noxious insects*), and of Johlson and Salomon (*vermin*), are too indistinct; and the rendering of Philippon, *ants*, is a conjecture, neither supported by internal probability, nor by any ancient authority.

13. The *miracle* connected with this plague is expressed in the words: *all the dust of the land became gnats through all the land of Egypt*, showing the unparalleled quantity of these obnoxious insects, so that they became a perfect and *dangerous* plague. And this is the climax in the third wonder. Whilst the two first were only disagreeable or troublesome, the third was indeed dangerous for men and beasts, as those insects penetrated into the most delicate and tender parts of the body, the eyes and nostrils. We are further justified in supposing, that this plague also occurred at an unusual season, in the month of February, whilst travellers inform us, “that the gnats generally increase about the time of the drying of the rice, about the end of October, and that they are less numerous in other seasons of the year” (*Sonnini, Travels*, i. p. 246).

14. And the interpreters of secret signs did so with their hidden arts, namely, they smote the dust as Aaron had done, in order to bring forth gnats. This is the easy and natural interpretation of the verse. Others translate

they tried to do so, which application, although not without parallel, seems less unforced. Arnheim, quoting the explanation of Chiskuni, takes the words “to bring forth,” in the sense of *leading away*: the magicians tried to remove the gnats, but they failed, and thus there were gnats upon men and beasts. However, the magicians had first to prove their power to produce the same miracles as Moses and Aaron, and the Hebrew verb here employed is to be taken as in Gen. i. 12: “and the earth produced grass.”—But they could not, according to Nachmanides, because here some new creation was to be effected, whilst the blood was only a change of the same element, and the frogs were only called forth from the waters, where they existed already before.—So there were gnats upon man and upon beast, an emphatical repetition, in order to point once more to the vexatious character of this plague; and we find in these words no allusion that “the gnats came upon the magicians also,” as Ebn Ezra believes.

15. The wise men of Pharaoh were now, for the first time, and most reluctantly compelled to acknowledge: *this is the finger of God*, that is, not by the power of Moses and Aaron has this miracle been produced, but by that of a Deity, mightier than they or ourselves; thus, 1st. They did not admit that Moses and Aaron were more powerfully gifted than they were themselves: and 2nd. They asserted that not the God of the Israelites (*Jehovah*), indignant at Pharaoh's refusal to allow the departure of His people, had inflicted

interpreters of secret signs said to Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: but Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he hearkened not to them, as the Lord had said.

16. And the Lord said to Moses, Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh—behold, he goeth out to the water—and say to him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me. 17. ¹For if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I shall send ²the beetle upon

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Else.

² Swarms of flies.

this plague, but simply a superior deity (*Elohim*), or the influence of the stars.—

Finger of God, is used instead of hand or power, as Psalm viii. 4; cix. 27, etc.

FOURTH PLAGUE. BEETLES (*Blatta Orientalis*). VER. 16—28.

16, 17. To fix precisely the animal constituting the fourth plague (*arob*), is a matter of almost still greater uncertainty than to determine the objects of the preceding calamity; but we have here, also, some criteria to guide us: 1st. These animals do not only attack man, but they fill the land (ver. 17); 2nd. They are of a *devouring* or rapacious propensity ("He sent the *arob*, which devoured them," Ps. lxxviii. 45); 3rd. They cause *devastations* in the land (ver. 20); 4th. They must be different from, and more seriously injurious than gnats, which formed the third plague.—We shall now be able to judge of the different opinions advanced on the signification of *arob*:—I. The old Hebrew and traditional meaning is, "*a mixture of noxious animals*," from the verb *arab*, to mix. Thus it is understood already by Josephus (*Antiq.* II. xiv. 3): "he filled the country with various and manifold animals, such as had never come into the sight of men before, by which the men perished themselves, and the land was deprived of the usual agricultural care." The word *arob* is, further, similarly interpreted by Targum Jonathan (a mixed swarm of wild beasts); the Vulgate (*omne genus muscarum*); Saadiah (a mixture of wild beasts); Rashi (all kinds of noxious animals and serpents and scorpions mixed together); Ebn Ezra (wild beasts in crowds, as lions, and wolves, and bears, and leopards); Luther (*Ungeziefer*); Mendelssohn (*Ge-*

wild); Zunz (*Die wilde Brut*), and many others. But against this opinion several objections must be raised: *a.* That this would imply a violence of the plague which is nowhere expressed or indicated in the text, and which would, considering its fatal character, and observing the steady gradation of the wonders, place it immediately before the tenth plague (see *supra*, p. 89).—*b.* It is altogether indistinct, and conveys but a very vague idea of the plague.—*c.* *arob* is evidently one individual animal, as appears from ver. 24; for the expression "one of a mixture," would be strangely illogical. II. The Septuagint, and after it the greater part of the modern interpreters (Rosenmüller, in the *Scholia*, but not in his *Orient*; De Wette, in his translation, although not in his Commentary on the Psalms; Gesenius, in the Dictionary, more decidedly than in the *Thesaurus*, and others), take *arob* as *dog-fly* (*κυνόμυια*), an insect abounding in Egypt. But let us compare the most emphatical descriptions of these animals. Sonnini (iii. 226) writes: "The most numerous and troublesome insects in Egypt are the *flies* (*musca domestica*, *L.*). Man and beasts are most cruelly tormented by them. It is scarcely possible to imagine their rage if they are determined to settle on any part of the body. If they are scared away they come the next moment again, and their pertinacity exhausts even the greatest patience. They like, especially, to sit on the corners of

thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses; and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of the beetle, and also the ground whereon they are.

18. And I shall 'distinguish in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no beetle shall be

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Sever.

the eyes, and on the eye-lids, those most sensitive parts, to which a little moisture attracts them." Let us even hear the evidently exaggerated account of Philo (Vit. Mos. ii. p. 101): "The flies rush on without fear, and if they are driven away they repeat their attacks with tenacious obstinacy till they have satisfied themselves with blood and flesh. Thus, the dog-fly is a bold and insidious insect; for it darts from a distance, like a spear, with a buzzing noise, and, approaching with great violence fixes its sting deeply into the skin." If we compare these descriptions with the essential criteria of the *arob* above enumerated, it is obvious that it *cannot* mean dogflies, because, *a.* these do not cover the *ground*; *b.* they do not devour or corrode things; *c.* they cause no devastations of the land; *d.* they are neither very different from, nor in any considerable degree more vexatious than the gnats (see our note to ver. 12). Thus the *arob* does not correspond with that insect in any of its indisputable qualities, and we are necessarily compelled to deviate here from the authority of the Septuagint and Philo.—Passing over the arbitrary and unsupported suppositions of Werner, who explains *arob*, *wolf* (see also Rashbam), or of others, who take it as *locusts*, we believe that all these criteria perfectly apply to the *Blatta Orientalis*, called in German Schabe or Kakerlake (Tarokan). This will at once be acknowledged as the most appropriate interpretation, if we give here some extracts from descriptions of that insect. Pratte (Travels through Abyssinia, p. 143) narrates: "The Kakerlaks appear in a moment in the houses, and break forth, as if by a spell, suddenly from every aperture and fissure. Shortly before my departure from Adua, they

filled, in a few minutes, the whole house of the resident missionary there. Only after the most laborious exertions, and after covering the floor of the apartments with hot coals, they succeeded in mastering them. If they make such attacks during the night, the inmates are compelled to give up the houses; and even little children, or sick persons, who are unable to rise alone, are then exposed to the greatest danger of life." Hasselquist and Forskal further report, that they inflict very painful bites with their jaws; that they gnaw and destroy clothes, household-furniture, leather, and articles of every kind; and either consume or render unavailable all eatables. "Those who have travelled about the Nile," says Munk (Pal. p. 126, *b*), know what a molestation those insects are; the houses are infested by them, and they are often seen by millions." These descriptions fully agree with the etymology, and with the narrative of our text. These insects really fill the land, and molest men and beasts; they consume all sorts of materials, devastate the country, and are in so far more detrimental than the gnats, as *they destroy also the property of the Egyptians*; they form, in this respect, the appropriate transition to the following severer plagues, which first ruin the wealth, and then the lives of the Egyptians. And thus the clear gradation of the plagues will be easily discernible. This beetle is an important emblem in the mythology of the Egyptians, and is found on almost all their sculptural and pictorial monuments. The Egyptian beetle is chiefly distinguished from the common one by a broad band upon the anterior margin of its oval corselet. Kirby (Bridgewater Treatises, ii. p. 357) mentions another etymological derivation:

there, in order that thou mayest know that *I am* the Lord in the midst of the earth. 19. And I shall put a division between my people and thy people: to-morrow shall this sign be. 20. And the Lord did so; and there came swarms of beetles into the house of Pharaoh, and *into* his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt: the land was

"It has been suggested to me, that the Egyptian plague of flies was a *cock-roach* (*Blatta Ægyptiaca*). The Hebrew name of the animal, which is the same by which the raven is distinguished, furnishes no slight argument in favour of it. The same word also signifies the *evening*. Now the cock-roach, at this time found in Egypt, is *black*, with the anterior margin of the thorax white, and they never emerge from their hiding-places till the *evening*; both of which circumstances would furnish a reason for the name given to it; and it might be called the *evening* insect, both from its colour, and the time of its appearance." This would, however, be a very indistinct designation, applying with equal, and perhaps greater propriety, to a considerable number of other animals, both insects, birds and wild beasts.—*Rise early in the morning*, etc. see note on vii. 15. — *Whereon they are*, that is, the Egyptians, in contradistinction to the Israelites.

18, 19. The special providence of God, in favour of His people, will manifest itself in this plague still more openly and obviously than in the preceding three calamities, by exempting them entirely from the obnoxious insects, which will prove so troublesome to the persons, and so destructive to the property of their Egyptian neighbours. This fact will impress upon the latter the twofold truth: 1st. That the Israelites are the people of God who sends the plagues over Egypt, on account, and in favour of, His people; 2nd. That He is the omnipotent Lord of the Universe; "that thou mayest know that *I am* the Lord in the midst of the earth;" or as Rashi explains, "although my glory is in heaven, my will is omnipotent on earth," similar to the expression in verse 6 (compare ix. 14, 29),

and that, therefore, the idols of the Egyptians are as impotent as the arts of the magicians are fallacious and powerless. Bruce, however, who has thoroughly investigated this subject (*Travels*, i. p. 5; v. p. 191), explains the fact mentioned in these verses, in the following manner: "It is well known, that the land of Goshen was a land of pasture, which was not tilled or sown, because it was not overflowed by the Nile. But the land overflowed by the Nile was the black earth of the valley of Egypt. Now sandy plains, or pasture-ground, are, even now, always exempted from similar plagues, which are invariably limited to the black soil, and, even at present, the former kinds of territory are the usual refuge of all cattle from the destructive influence of those insects." But all this does not remove the miraculous character of the promise made to the Israelites with regard to this plague, as the latter were not limited to Goshen only, but lived scattered through all parts of Egypt; and here also they were to remain free from the calamity (ver. 19; see note on i. 7).—*To-morrow shall this sign be*. In this, as in all similar cases, God fixed the time of the plague before its occurrence, not only to afford Pharaoh an opportunity of repenting, but to preclude at once the insinuation that it happened by chance, or in natural course, and to convince the obdurate mind of Pharaoh still more forcibly of God's unlimited power; compare ix. 5.

20. The predicted calamity took place at the appointed time; and enormous swarms of voracious beetles molested the palace of Pharaoh and the dwellings of all his people, and devastated the land of Egypt. Referring to our exposition on ver. 16, we find the *wonder* of this plague

devastated by the beetle. 21. And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go you, sacrifice to your God in the land. 22. And Moses said, It is not meet to do so; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God: behold, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? 23. We will go a three days' journey

in the following data: 1. That, as it occurred at the command of God, so it disappeared at the prayer of Moses (ver. 28). 2. That those insects infested the land in prodigious numbers, and with a violence unheard of before or after that time; and 3. That the Israelites, whether living in Goshen or dispersed throughout Egypt, were perfectly free from the calamity. Gesenius, who takes *arob* as dog-fly, is obliged to suppose the wonder to have consisted in the circumstance, that those insects, which usually molest beasts only, changed their nature and attacked men also (ver. 17); and Rosenmüller, who is well aware that the dog-flies do not devastate *the land*, explains that by the words *the land*, the *inhabitants* of the land are to be understood. The forced character of either opinion is too obvious to require comment.

21. This plague was so fearful, and so decidedly more alarming than the preceding miracles, that the magicians did not even try their arts to produce similar effects, and Pharaoh was once more compelled to send for Moses and Aaron, and to offer them concessions: *Go you, sacrifice to your God in the land*, that is, in Egypt; naturally fearful, lest the Israelites if once beyond his boundaries, would not return to resume their slavish works, so cruelly and unjustly imposed upon them.

22. Moses objects, they could not venture to sacrifice in Egypt, for the people would stone them, *if they sacrificed the abominations of the Egyptians before their eyes*; that is, if they killed and offered those animals which it was, in the eyes of the Egyptians, an abominable crime to kill, because they were objects of holy veneration. The bull,

the cow, the sheep, and the goat, the usual sacrifices of the Hebrews, were among the sacred animals of the Egyptians; although we know that none of these animals—perhaps with the only exception of the cow, which was sacred to Isis (Herod. ii. 4)—was universally worshipped by the Egyptians; but that the same animals which were considered inviolable in some districts, were killed and eaten in others. So, for instance, the Thebans abstained from eating mutton, but killed goats; whilst the Mendesians held the goats sacred, but killed sheep. The probable cause of these surprising discrepancies is, that each district, or *nomos*, formed originally an independent state, mostly founded by priests, the centre of which was the temple, and that even after the amalgamation of those different provinces and tribes under one common rule, they retained the religious customs of their ancestors, which were still clearly discernible in later times. It is not the place here, psychologically to investigate into the origin, extent, and internal character of so extraordinary a phenomenon as the animal worship, which was not limited to Egypt alone, but was, and partially is still, prevalent throughout the whole of Africa; to enquire whether the leading principle in declaring an animal sacred, was its usefulness or its dangerousness, its majestic appearance or its beauty, or the contrary;—it is sufficient to be conscious of the truth, that the monstrosity of animal worship is so distant from civilised or refined notions, that we experience the greatest difficulty in attempting to represent or to analyse to ourselves its character and tendency. (Compare our supplementary note on ii.

into the desert, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as He will say to us. 24. And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the desert; only you shall not go very far away: entreat for me. 25. And Moses said, Behold, I go out from thee, and I shall entreat the Lord, 'and the beetle will disappear from

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—That the swarms of flies may depart.

10). But already Herodotus (ii. 65) reports about the severity and fanaticism with which the killing of those beasts was prosecuted: "If a person kills one of them designedly, the punishment is death; if it is done unintentionally, he pays the fine which the priests impose upon him. But he who kills an ibis or a hawk, be it designedly or not, must mercilessly die." This was, for instance, the fate of a Roman ambassador, who had unintentionally killed a cat. At conflagrations the first and most anxious care of the Egyptians was to save the cats and dogs from the flames. The Egyptian armies brought not seldom home, from their foreign expeditions, a great number of these animals, which they had found dead, and which they buried in their own country, at appointed places, with great pomp and under general lamentation, after having carefully embalmed them. If a cat died in a house, the inmates, as a sign of mourning, shaved the eyebrows; but, if a dog died, the whole body was shaved.—Onkelos paraphrases correctly: because we take those animals, which the Egyptians worship, as a sacrifice to the Lord our God. Others believe, that *abomination of the Egyptians* is simply identical with *gods of the Egyptians*, as Camosh, the god of the Moabites, is called the *abomination of the Moabites* (1 Kings xi. 7). But how can we suppose that Moses would, in addressing Pharaoh, call the Egyptian gods *abominations*; and this objection is but artificially removed by the opinion of some interpreters, that Moses really said to Pharaoh *Egypt's gods*, but that he wrote down later *Egypt's abominations*: which precedent would lead to questionable analogies. Not more tenable

appears to us the opinion of Hengstenberg, Gerlach, and others, that the Israelites feared to sacrifice animals, which were not worthy or pure enough in the eyes of the Egyptians, to be offered to the Deity, and which would thus be an abomination for them. It is true that the Egyptians were most particularly careful in selecting the most faultless animals for their sacrifices; that they had a great number of minute precepts to regulate this matter, and that capital punishment awaited any one who sacrificed an animal which had not been examined by the priests, and, by the impress of their official seal, declared fit for an offering to the gods. But was it to the deities of the Egyptians that the Israelites intended to sacrifice? Could it, then, revolt the religious feelings of the former, if they saw animals which, to their notions, were not perfectly clean, sacrificed to a deity which they did not acknowledge?—How Moses could expect that the shepherd-king, who was of Arabian descent, would admit the force of an argument based on truly Egyptian idolatry, has been explained in our note to i. 8, p. 7. Besides, Moses had certainly to fear the Egyptians, who, although subjugated, formed still the majority of the population.

23. Moses demanded, therefore, permission for the Israelites to go a three days' journey into the desert (out of the sight of the Egyptians), and to perform there the sacrifices to the Lord—"as He will say to us," namely, which animals we shall sacrifice, and in what quantity. The Sept., Vulg. and Luther take, not inappropriately, the verb in the past tense: *as He has commanded us*, (see iii. 18).

24—28. Pharaoh, forced by the in-

Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, to-morrow: but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the Lord. 26. And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the Lord. 27. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; and ¹the beetle disappeared from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people: there remained not one. 28. And Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he would not let the people go.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—He removed the swarms of flies.

supportable vexation of the beetles, consents to the request, only adding, *that they should not go too far away*, i. e. not more than a three days' journey. Moses did not object to this condition; he committed himself entirely to the guidance and direction of God; he was contented if he but attained his immediate purpose of moving Pharaoh to allow the departure of the Israelites; and he confided faithfully in God, who, he was assured, would by His judgments and the succeeding events, remove the obligations which that promise imposed upon him and the

Israelites.—Moses, once deluded by Pharaoh after the second plague (vers. 4, 11), fears the same faithlessness on this occasion, well knowing that the submission of Pharaoh was not the consequence of true contrition, nor of his acknowledgment of the God of the Hebrews, but only the momentary effect of an urgent embarrassment. He, therefore, warned Pharaoh not to deceive him again; prayed then to the Lord, caused the disappearance of the plague, but was as unscrupulously deceived by the hardened tyrant as before.

CHAPTER IX.

SUMMARY.—Pestilence among the cattle (ver. 1—7); boils on the skin (ver. 8—12); and a hail-storm of unparalleled vehemence, destroying the crops and herds of the field, and killing men and beasts, constitute the three following plagues, which although they manifested their purport and the might of the Lord still more obviously by not injuring the Israelites, and although they produced by the combined terrors of the elements (vers. 14, 23, 24) a momentary self-humiliation of Pharaoh (ver. 27), did yet not effect an internal and thorough change of the obstinate mind of the Egyptian king; and the Israelites were hopelessly retained in their oppressive bondage (see besides notes on vers. 1, 8 and 13).

THEN the Lord said to Moses, Go to Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the Lord God of the

FIFTH PLAGUE. PESTILENCE AMONG THE CATTLE. VER. 1—7.

1. After the beetles, which had devastated considerable property, God inflicted, as the fifth plague, an extensive destruction of the most necessary and valuable animals of the Egyptians: and this calamity caused, therefore, infinitely more real damage than all the preceding

plagues, to a country, the wealth of which consists, in a great measure, in its cattle. Although neither ancient nor modern travellers and geographers have paid particular attention to the diseases of the cattle in Egypt, it is self-evident, that in a climate, where inundations,

Hebrews, Let my people go that they may serve me. 2. For if thou refuse to let *them* go, and wilt hold them still, 3. Behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle which *is* in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon

morasses, burning winds, and other injurious influences tending to infest the air, are particularly prevalent, pestilence and similar diseases must be frequent and endemic. It is confirmed by all modern travellers, that in the Delta of the Nile pestilence rages from time to time among the cattle with such violence, that the inhabitants are compelled to import oxen from Syria or the islands of the Archipelago. We must, therefore, find the *miracle* in circumstances similar to those of the preceding plague, namely: 1. In the aggravated character of the pestilence (ver. 3); 2. that it took place on the command of God, evidently at an unusual season; and 3. that the Israelites were again exempted from it (ver. 6).

3. *Upon thy cattle, etc.* In the enumeration of the domestic animals of Egypt, the horse occupies the first place, that country being particularly rich in horses of superior quality, which were sought by foreign princes and monarchs. They were chiefly used for the war chariots, which formed one of the most famous arms of the Egyptians. See Deut. xvii. 16; Gen. xlviii. 17; and our note on xiv. 7.—*Mules and asses* also are frequently found on Egyptian monuments. Asses were commonly used for riding (see our note on iv. 20), and they are represented richly caparisoned. They were further employed for treading out corn, and for many, especially agricultural purposes, for which their hardiness and the small cost of their maintenance rendered them particularly appropriate. How great the number of asses was, is obvious from the fact, that a single individual possessed not less than seven hundred and sixty of them as beasts of burden, and there is at present scarcely any husbandman who does not possess some asses. Perfectly unfounded is,

therefore, the assertion of Bohlen, that the Egyptians kept no asses, which they abhorred on account of their colour. The usual sacrifices of Typhon consisted in asses, and they must, therefore, have existed in Egypt. And admitted even, that asses were considered unclean animals, they were, from this reason, as little excluded from the land as swine, which were regarded with particular abomination, and were yet repeatedly represented on the monuments.—Although the testimony of Minutoli, who is said to have found heads and necks of *camels* represented, two by two, upon the obelisks of Luxor, is still an isolated monumental evidence for the existence of camels in ancient Egypt; we are by no means justified in impugning the truth of the Scripture account, which mentions these useful animals not only in our passage, but already in the time of Abraham, who received some of them from the Egyptian king as a present. It is, a priori, improbable that the Egyptians should not, at a very early period, have been acquainted, through the medium of the Arabic tribes and the eastern merchants, with the valuable qualities of that patient animal. At present, it is one of the principal and of the most lucrative occupations of the Arabic tribes inhabiting the borders of the valley of Egypt, to rear camels and to sell them into the different provinces. They are extensively employed for the transport of goods, and especially for the ingathering of the crops, for which even those, who do not possess any, hire them according to their wants. Although they were not used in war as by the Indians and other ancient nations, they were found very valuable for the transport of baggage and provisions. Under these circumstances it is of little importance, that camels do not, except in very rare instances, occur on Egyptian

the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: ¹a very heavy pestilence. 4. And the Lord will ²distinguish between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt: and there will nothing die of all *that belongs* to the children of Israel. 5. And the Lord fixed an appointed time, saying, To-morrow the Lord will do this thing in the land. 6. And the Lord did that thing on the morrow, and all

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—There shall be a very grievous murrain.

² Sever.

sculptures or paintings. Not every thing, which is not represented on the monuments, was therefore necessarily unknown to the Egyptians. The monuments are neither intended to furnish, nor can they furnish, a complete delineation of all the branches of public and private life, of all the products and phenomena, of the whole animal, vegetable and mineral creation of the country. They cannot be viewed as a complete cyclopædia of Egyptian customs and civilisation. Thus we find no representation of fowls and pigeons, although the country abounded in them; of the wild ass and wild boar, although frequently met with in Egypt; none of the process relating to the casting of statues and other objects in bronze, although many similar subjects connected with the arts are represented; none of the marriage-ceremony, and of numerous other subjects. Since, therefore, no conclusion can be drawn from the absence of monumental delineation to the actual existence of an animal in Egypt, it is unnecessary to recur, in this instance, to the supposition, that the Egyptians abstained from representing the camels on their holy monuments, because it was too much associated with the idea of the nomad shepherds, so detested by the priests. This explanation, scarcely tenable in itself, would not apply to any of the other instances enumerated.—*Sheep* are so far from not thriving in Egypt, as modern critics have asserted with a polemical view to the Biblical statements, that they are expressly reported by ancient and modern travellers to be found there in great abundance and of superior

quality. In Thebes they were sacred; and in the Mendesian district they were sacrificed (Herod ii. 41, 42); in Lykopolis they were eaten; they lambed and were shorn twice annually (Diod. i. 36, 87); on the monuments they occur most frequently, and in some districts very great numbers were kept. They are as abundant at present in Egypt; their wool is an important article of export; and their flesh forms the usual animal food of the inhabitants (see *Wilkinson*, ii. p. 368; *Champollion*, Letters, p. 51; *Déscrip. de l'Égypte* xvii. p. 129).

5. *And God fixed an appointed time* for the occurrence of the plague (see on viii. 19).—Nachmanides explains more speciously than correctly: the cattle, which is *in the fields* will die, because the shepherds so despised among the Egyptians lived far from the towns.

6. *And all the cattle of Egypt* (i. e., of the Egyptians) died. It is not unusual, that the adjective *all* signifies in Hebrew only a *great part*; for instance, in Deut. xix. 3, it is said, that “*all murderers*” should fly to the refuge cities, which the next verse qualifies by stating the class of murderers entitled to that privilege. And so we must understand that word here, since we learn from vers. 10 and 19, that *all* the cattle of the Egyptians was destroyed. A similar interpretation we are compelled to adopt in ver. 25, where we cannot explain literally that “*all the grass of the field*” was destroyed by hail, on account of x. 15, where the locusts are described causing the devastation of the grass, “*which the hail had left.*”—Rashi, following the Midrash, interprets: “*all*

the cattle of Egypt died; but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one. 7. And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. ¹But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

8. And the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron, Take to you handfuls of soot of the furnace, and let Moses

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And.

cattle, which was *in the field*, died (ver. 3), but that which the Egyptians either kept permanently in their houses, or had driven home at the commencement of the plague

was not destroyed.”—Bullet: “Des bêtes de toutes lessortes”; against the genius of the Hebrew language.

SIXTH PLAGUE. BOILS. VER. 8—12.

8. Now even the persons of the Egyptians were attacked with leprous diseases, which although not fatal, are attended with the most excruciating pains, and might, if neglected, prove dangerous: this is the next step in the climax of the divine plagues dispensed against Egypt. The general character of the sixth plague is perfectly clear from the etymology of the Hebrew words with which it is designated; and which mean literally: “an inflammation of the skin, which produces or breaks out into pustules or blains.” But it is difficult to fix the exact disease here expressed. That it is an epidemic commonly prevalent in Egypt, is obvious from Deut. xxviii. 27, 35, where it is simply called a disease of Egypt; and we learn from the same passage, that it belongs to those disorders which defy human skill. But the successive change of the inhabitants of Egypt and their customs, has produced so essential modifications in the sanitary condition of the country, that it is hazardous, at present, to decide on the exact nature of that epidemic. Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Reinhard, and others, suppose it to be the *elephantiasis*, which covers the skin with black scurfs, and tumefies the feet, producing tormenting pain. It is by ancient writers called “an evil peculiar to Egypt.” It begins generally with scrofulous tumours on the

skin, and is characterized by glands in the face and other parts of the body; they are at first of the size of a pea, then of a walnut, or of a hen’s egg. But it is known, that it is a peculiarity of this hideous disease, that the patient feels in all other respects quite healthy, and may live with that complaint for many years. And these symptoms seem to be contrary to the description of our text; because 1. the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils (ver. 11); and 2. the latter caused certainly pain, but they were in themselves no more grievous plague than the gnats or the beetles; but only a gradation *in the same kind*. Besides 3. the Elephantiasis never infects animals (vers. 9, 10).—Now, Eichhorn and others suppose here that disease, which is thus described: “In the autumn men are attacked by ulcers at the thighs and knees, by which they are destroyed in two or three days.” But our text does not speak of a deadly disease; for in no part is it mentioned, that it was attended with the destruction of life.—Other writers again understand it as a kind of painful blisters which at the time of the rise of the Nile are frequent in Egypt, which are increased by drinking water of the Nile, and which are therefore called “grains of the Nile” (Habe Nili, *Volney*, i. 192). But 1. this cannot be called an “incurable disease” (Deut. xxviii. 35), for it generally passes

sprinkle it towards heaven before the eyes of Pharaoh. 9. And it shall ¹be like dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking forth *with* blains upon man and upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt. 10. And they took soot of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh: and Moses sprinkled it up towards heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth *with* blains upon man and

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Become small dust.

away from itself, or after the application of simple domestic remedies; and 2. it never befalls the cattle.—And Jahn, lastly, (*Archaeol. I., ii. 384*) supposes it to be the *Barras* or black leprosy, which, however, according to the description given by him invariably ends in death. We must, therefore, at the present state of the pathological observations of Egypt, content ourselves to know the general character of the disease here expressed. Osburn (*Mon. Hist. ii. p. 585*) rejects, without argument, this signification of *furnace* “as a mistake altogether,” and translates, also without proof, “country on fire,” connecting this expression with the burning of the stubble and weeds on the high lands. But this is done in Egypt during the overflow of the Nile, whereas this plague occurred in the course of March.

9. *And it shall be like dust in all the land of Egypt*, that is, it shall be spread by the wind throughout Egypt like dust, carrying disease along with it wherever it settles. Others explain: *it shall become dust* in the land of Egypt. If so, asks Rosenmüller, justly, why did not Moses take dust at once, and spread it towards heaven?

10. And Moses “sprinkled soot of the furnace towards heaven,” as a symbolical action, indicating that God sends the diseases through the infected air upon the Egyptians. It is well known that the ancient nations were accustomed to such mysterious signs, with which, therefore, most of the plagues are introduced (see vii. 20; viii. 2, 13, etc.). Some archaeologists find a peculiar significance in the ceremony here performed by Moses, bringing it into connection with a strange

and barbarous custom long in vogue among the Egyptians. They had several towns consecrated to Typhon, the evil genius in Egyptian mythology; some of these Typhonic cities were Heliopolis, Idithyia, Abarei, and Busiris, where annually, at certain seasons of the year, human sacrifices were offered to the ominous tutelary deity. It is reported, that for victims of these sanguinary rites, persons were chosen with light, reddish hair, and a certain complexion rarely met with among the native Egyptians. Strangers were, therefore, usually taken; they were burnt alive on conspicuous altars, and thus sacrificed to avert the wrath of the god, and to save the country from destruction; the ashes were then gathered by the priests and scattered in the air, with the confident hope that with that sacred dust the blessings of heaven would spread over the whole country. Now, it is supposed, that during the time of the oppression of the Israelites in Egypt, these unfortunate victims were taken from them, as an offering particularly grateful to that deity, and that Moses spread the ashes from a furnace (which is the usual Biblical type for Israel's thralldom in Egypt), likewise in the air, but not to call forth a blessing, but a severe punishment of God. However, if the ceremony of spreading ashes in the air was a usual symbol for producing a certain effect over the whole land, we require no analogy to explain it; and if individuals with “light reddish hair” were chosen for that horrid rite, they cannot have been Israelites, to whom that quality does not apply, save by exception.

11. *And the interpreters of secret signs*

upon beast. 11. And the interpreters of secret signs could not stand before Moses because of the boils: for the boils were upon the interpreters of secret signs, and upon all the Egyptians. 12. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not to them, as the Lord had spoken to Moses.

13. And the Lord said to Moses, Rise early in the morning, and step before Pharaoh, and say to him,

could not stand before Moses because of the boils; therefore they could not even try their arts; they were included in this plague, as in all the others, without being able to avert the calamity. The supposition of Ebn Ezra, that during the former plagues they knew, by their acquaintance with the natural sciences, how to secure for themselves an alleviation of the evils, is open to the objection that, if so, they would certainly have shared, with Pharaoh at least, the benefit of this superior knowledge; and yet the king appears everywhere to have been among the greatest sufferers. Besides, it is repeatedly stated in the narrative of the preceding plagues, that they would fall upon *Pharaoh's servants*, among whom the magicians are included. In this, the sixth plague, the fact that the Egyptian priests participated in its odious effects, seems to have been expressly mentioned, from the reason that that caste considered the most scrupulous cleanliness as a part of their superior sanctity. Therefore they carefully shaved the whole body every three days, as the hair might possibly harbour vermin; they performed ablutions several times every day, bathing twice a day, and as often during the night, and wore, during their priestly functions, no garments except of the finest linen, because wool might conceal either filth or insects. They must, therefore, have been particularly horror-

struck at an infliction which covers the whole body with ulcerous matter of the most hideous nature. But the whole Egyptian people took a particular pride in cultivating habits of cleanliness, and hence is explicable the aversion with which they looked upon those foreigners who allowed their hair and beards to grow, especially the Greeks, who were, from the times of Homer, famous for their long and beautiful hair, and to whom that poet applies the standing epithet: "long-haired Achæans;" and Herodotus (ii. 41, 91) asserts, that no Egyptian of either sex, would, on any account, kiss the lips of a Greek, make use of his knife, his spit and cauldron, or taste the flesh of an animal which had been slaughtered by his hand.—Pharaoh did not request Moses to pray for him in this calamity (as he did at the fifth plague), perhaps because, as Ebn Ezra remarks, it did not last long.

12. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh. Here, for the first time, is the obstinacy of Pharaoh, after the general remark in iv. 21, referred to God. We are justified in concluding from this fact, that Pharaoh's sin preceded and provoked God's punishments, which, however, far from moving his stubborn heart, tended, by the leniency of their character, to harden it still more, and to bring him into a self-conscious opposition to the God of Israel.

SEVENTH PLAGUE. HAIL. VER. 13—34.

13. Six plagues, with increasing vehemence, had proved ineffectual, to work a change on that perverse pride of the Egyptian monarch, which impotently

exclaims: "Mine is the Nile, and I have made it" (Ezek. xxix. 9). The long-suffering of God had mercifully allowed him ample time to convince himself of

Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. 14. For this time I shall send all my plagues upon thy heart, and against thy servants, and against thy people; that thou mayest know that *there is* none like me in all the earth. 15. ¹For now I might have stretched out my hand, and might have smitten thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou wouldst have been cut off from the earth. 16. But only for this cause ²have I let thee exist, in order to show ³thee my power, and that my name may be acknowledged throughout all the earth. 17. As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth.

² I raised thee up.

³ In thee.

the weakness and insignificance of his idols, compared with the Lord of Hosts; but in vain; and other, and still more awful chastisements were necessary, if not to reform his haughty mind, at least to bend his inflexible will. Why God did not work this ulterior effect by one severe overwhelming punishment, instead of ten successive blows, is answered in our text: "in order to show Pharaoh the whole power of God, and to make His glory resound throughout the earth." However, here begin those plagues which spread horror and awe over the country, and which destroy not only the property but the lives of the Egyptians. The hail, mixed with thunder and terrific bolts of lightning, cause such devastation in the fields and such ravages among men and beasts, that the stubbornness of Pharaoh is so much curbed as to exclaim: "I have sinned; the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked," and to request Moses anew to pray for the cessation of the calamity—although his obtuse heart proved again incapable of repentance and atonement.—That hail is not unusual in Egypt is acknowledged in our text (vers. 18, 24), but none of the geographers or travellers relate such destructive qualities of this phenomenon as are described to have taken place in this

miracle. According to verses 31 and 32, it occurred in the season when the barley was in ear, and the flax balled, but when wheat and rye were not in such a forward state, that is, in the beginning of the year, in March. For "in Egypt the barley is gathered in the sixth month after sowing, wheat in the seventh" (Pliny xviii. 7), and, as all grain is, in that country, sown at the same time, in October, barley comes to maturity in March, and wheat in April, a chronological date which admirably agrees with the time of the Exodus. During their sojourn in Alexandria, Wansleben and Monconys witnessed thunder-storms in the month of January, the former, on the 1st, the latter on the 17th and 18th of the month; the tempest was accompanied with hail. Perry also observes, that it hails in January and February in Kairo, although but seldom. Pococke and Korte witnessed at Fium, in February, rain-showers mixed with hail-stones. Bruce heard, in Cossir, during the roaring of the wind, throughout the whole month of February, and a little later, along the Arabian gulph, the crash of the thunder. Whilst we have thus an abundance of testimonials as to the frequency of hail- and thunder-storms in the three first months of the year, we find

18. Behold, to-morrow about this time I shall cause it to rain a very heavy hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the day of its foundation even until now. 19. Send therefore now, *and* 'bring in safety thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; *for* upon every man and beast which will be found in the field, and will not be gathered into the house, the hail will come down upon them, and they will die. 20. He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses. 21. But he who regarded not the word of the Lord left his servants and his cattle in the field.—22. And the Lord said to Moses, Stretch forth thy hand towards heaven, that there may be hail in all the

⁴ *Engl. Vers.*—Gather.

the same unanimity with regard to the general mildness and harmlessness of these phenomena. Du Bois Aymé (*Déscript.* xvii. 135) remarks, that the thunder which occurred in Egypt during his stay there was so weak and gentle that several persons who were with him at the same time did not hear or notice it. During the visit of Thevenot in Egypt, there was a thunder-storm which killed a man; this was an occurrence so uncommon and unparalleled that nobody was able to explain it, and it caused universal consternation. If we compare herewith the fearful character of the same phenomena as described in our text (ver. 25), we can obviously perceive its miraculous nature, which is again enhanced by the circumstance that they occurred and ceased at the command of Moses (ver. 33), and that the Hebrews were exempted from their effects (ver. 26). About the rarity of rain in Egypt, see on verse 33.

14. *For this time I shall send all my plagues upon thy heart*; that is, I shall now inflict upon thee such a combination of awful punishments—hail, and thunder, and fires of lightning, and torrents of rain, in fact, all the united horrors of nature, that thy heart, hitherto proud and inflexible, but now overpowered by these

signs of my majesty, will feel its weakness, and acknowledge my superiority over all the deities worshipped by men.

16. God multiplied, in an ascending gradation, the plagues against Pharaoh, in order to prove, by their peculiar character, not only to Pharaoh, but to all the nations of the earth, that He favours His worshippers and destroys those who obstinately disregard Him. Pharaoh was preserved by the forbearance of God, in the midst of many fearful plagues; and so he became a more signal example afterwards.

18. The violent character of hail- and thunder-storms is unusual in Egypt, although these phenomena are in themselves not uncommon in that country. See ver. 13.

19. In the first four months of the year (that is, during the season, when the seventh plague took place, see ver. 13), the cattle is sent out to pasture in the fields, whilst during the remaining part of the year it feeds on dry food (*Niebuhr*, Trav. p. 142; *Hartmann*, p. 232; *Déscr. de l'Eg.* xvii. p. 126).

20. We have to supply here, that Moses executed the command of God and announced the plague to Pharaoh; and the Samaritan codex has here, as in similar preceding passages, an addition to that effect. See note to vii. 18. "This

land of Egypt, upon man and upon beast, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt. 23. And Moses stretched forth his ¹staff towards heaven: and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and ²fire came down upon the earth; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt. 24. So there was hail, and ³continuous fire in the midst of the hail, very heavy, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. 25. And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that *was* in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and broke every tree of the field. 26. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel *were*, there was no hail. 27. And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, I have

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Rod. ² Fire ran along upon the ground. ³ Fire mingled with the hail.

was a test for Moses to prove, how far the fear of that God, in whose name he had come, had already found access to the minds of the Egyptians."

23. *And fire came down upon the earth.* *Fire*, namely, lightning, as 1 Kings xviii. 38; Job i. 16, etc. The Engl. Vers. renders strangely: "fire ran along upon the ground," (precisely as Ebn Ezra remarks: "the fire here went on the ground, contrary to its nature, which makes it ascend upwards"); which interpretation is precluded by the Hebrew text.

24. *So there was hail, and continuous fire in the midst of the hail.* Targ. Onk., Sept., and Vulgate render: "fire mingled with the hail;" so also Luther, Engl. Vers., Vater, Rosenm., Philippon, and others, without regard to the etymology of the Hebrew word. Zunz and Arnheim, a spreading fire, which would include *conflagrations*; Gesenius, De Wette and Maurer: conglomerated fire or balls of fire, which would impart to the words a character not hinted at in the text.

25. About *every* herb, and *every* tree, see on ver. 6.

27. *I have sinned this time*; that is, as Nachmanides explains: "This time I acknowledge that I have sinned."

28. *And you shall stay no longer, pray forthwith to the Lord.*

29. Moses went out of the town in order to pray, either because the solitude enhanced his devotion, or (according to the Midrash) because the town was infested with idols.—*The thunder shall cease.* This sudden cessation of the plague by the will of God was eminently calculated to manifest to the king of Egypt His paramount power over all the elements and the whole earth, which authority was not—as that of the idols was considered to be—confined to one country or to any one part of the world.

30. *That you do not yet fear the Lord God.* Ebn Ezra connects this sentence with the following verse, and renders: "already, before you feared the Lord, your flax and barley were smitten, and I can therefore not pray for their restoration," which interpretation must be considered as forced.

31, 32. *And the flax* (*Linum usitatissimum*). It was in ancient times, as it is now, much cultivated in Egypt, in the well-known square beds; especially in the Delta, in the vicinity of Pelusium (*Linum Pelusiacum*); the stalks reach a height of more than three feet, and the thickness of cane (compare *Herod.* ii. 105;

sinned this time: the Lord *is* righteous, and I and my people are wicked. 28. Entreat the Lord, ⁴for it is already too much to be more thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer. 29. And Moses said to him, When I am gone out of the city, I shall spread out my hands to the Lord; *and* the thunder will cease, neither will there be any more hail, that thou mayest know that the earth is the Lord's. 30. But as for thee and thy servants, I know ⁵that you do not yet fear the Lord God. (31. And the flax and the barley were smitten; for the barley *was in* the ear, and the flax *was* bolled. 32. But the wheat and the ⁶spelt were not smitten; for they ⁷*are* later.) 33. And Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread out

⁴ *Engl. Vers.*—For it is enough that there be no more mighty thunderings, etc.
⁵ That ye will not yet fear. ⁶ Rye. ⁷ Were not grown up.

Pliny, xix. 1, 2). See our Introduction to chap. xxv.: "The Holy Tabernacle;" II. C. i. We have there remarked on the very extensive use made of flax, and the various purposes to which linen was applied. Egypt was, in fact, the great linen market of the ancient world; and thus the enormity of the loss occasioned by the seventh plague will readily be estimated. *Barley* was both in Egypt and Palestine extensively sown, in October and the beginning of November; it ripened in March, and was generally cut in April. It was partly used as food for animals, especially horses, partly for bread for the poorer classes, and for the preparation of a common beverage. The barley-bread was considered very wholesome, though not so nutritious as that of wheat; and the Arabs in Morocco eat, at present, exclusively unleavened barley-bread.—*And the wheat* which, as is universally known, was the most cultivated grain in Asia and Egypt. *And the spelt*, *Triticum Spelta* Linn., with a four-leaved blunted calix, small blossoms, with little awns, and smooth, as it were, shorn, slender ears, the grains of which sit so firmly in the husks that they must be freed from them by peculiar devices; it grows about

as high as barley, and is extensively cultivated in the southern countries of Europe, in Egypt, Arabia and Palestine, in more than one species. The Septuagint translates it by *ἐλυρα*, in *Pliny* "arinca," which corresponds with the French *riguet*; and *Herodotus* (ii. 36) observes, that it was used by the Egyptians for baking bread. *These were not smitten, for they are later.* Wheat and spelt are still backward in March, when flax and barley are already ripe for the sickle (see note on ver. 13). The former were still tender and flexible, and, therefore, yielded to the violence of the hail and rain, and remained uninjured; whilst the hard, stiff and dry stalks of flax and barley were, by their resistance, easily broken and destroyed.

33. *And the rain was not poured upon the earth.* Rain is so seldom in Egypt, especially in those parts which lie low and flat, that *Herodotus* distinctly says: "it never rains in that country" (ii. 14). "Egypt enjoys such fruitfulness," observes *Pliny*, "that she owes nothing to rain or the skies." *Mela* calls Egypt "a country without rain;" *Lucilius* says: "No peasant looks to the skies," and *Tibullus*: "the grass prays not to the rain-giving Jupiter." The very construction of

his hands to the Lord; and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth. 34. But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders had ceased, ¹he continued to sin, and hardened his heart, he and his servants. 35. And the heart of Pharaoh remained hardened, and he would not let the children of Israel go, as the Lord had spoken by Moses.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—He sinned yet more.

the houses in Egypt, of mere crude bricks, shows the rarity of rain, which, if it had fallen often and in great quantity, would soon have endangered the safety of the edifices. And, although modern travellers have sometimes witnessed rain in that country, it was so lenient and excited such astonishment among the inhabitants, (at Thebes showers fell about five or six times in the course of the year, and a continued storm of heavy rain is quite unusual) that we can well understand the force of the narrative of this plague, which had, besides other more formidable phenomena, violent torrents of rain as an ungrateful accompaniment.

34. *And he continued to sin.* Some interpreters explain: Because Pharaoh had acknowledged God, saying, that He is righteous, but he himself wicked (ver. 27), and yet resisted His commands, he is henceforth a wanton, intentional sinner and, is therefore, still more criminal; and the English Version translates accordingly: "and he sinned yet more." Although certainly the weight of Pha-

raoh's guilt became greater, the more numerous the corrections were, to which he obstinately resisted, especially when a conviction of his criminal conduct had come over him; the Hebrew words imply simply a *continuation* of the same sin, a repetition of the former refusal to allow the departure of the Israelites; and they are equivalent to the phrase: "Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also" (viii. 28).

35. Calvin finds in the concluding words of this verse: "as the Lord had spoken by Moses," an intimation of the circumstance, that Moses communicated to Pharaoh the divine prediction of his obstinacy, and that, therefore, here is again a significant progress in the narrative. But the context does not justify such assumption. If Moses made any communication concerning the predicted continuance of Pharaoh's stubbornness, he made it to the Israelites, not to Pharaoh, upon whom it would have worked a very undesirable effect, although even the former alternative is not necessarily implied in the word *through* or *by*.

CHAPTERS X. XI.

SUMMARY.—Swarms of *locusts* are announced by Moses as the eighth plague. The officers of Pharaoh, dismayed at the predicted infliction, earnestly warn him to yield at last to the wish of the Israelites. Moses and Aaron appear again before the king; but on hearing their request, that all the Israelites, with their wives, children, and cattle, wished to go to celebrate a festival to the Lord, he expelled them from his presence. Enormous swarms of locusts are, from Arabia, brought over Egypt by an east-wind; they desolate the whole vegetation of the land, and all the horrors of an impending famine torment the minds of the Egyptians. The king sends once more for Moses and Aaron, confesses his wickedness, asks them to pray for the discontinuance of this calamity; a strong west-wind drives the locusts back; all their swarms perish in the Red Sea;—but Pharaoh remains hardened and treacherous.—As a transition to the last and most awful plague a

calamity is introduced—dense *darkness* during three days—more calculated to fill the minds of the Egyptians with a deep sense of their helplessness before the Lord of Israel, than to inflict real injury upon them; and, indeed, Pharaoh makes another concession, allowing the children to accompany their parents into the wilderness; but when Moses and Aaron firmly insist upon taking with them all their cattle also for sacrifices, Pharaoh forbids them, under penalty of death, ever to appear again before him.—Moses promises this energetically, having already received the revelation concerning the last plague, the death of all the firstborn in Egypt, which calamity he now emphatically announces to Pharaoh, adding that the Israelites will leave the land unhurt by the pestilence, honoured and enriched by the Egyptians, and urged on even by the king himself.—Moses leaves Pharaoh with indignation. A brief summary of the preceding plagues, and their inefficiency upon the heart of Pharaoh, is annexed as a transition or preparation for the last infliction (see xi. 1, 9).

AND the Lord said to Moses, Go to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might show these my signs ¹among

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Before him.

EIGHTH PLAGUE. LOCUSTS. VER. 1—20.

1. The eighth plague, consisting in immense cloud-darkening hosts of voracious locusts, filled in its very announcement the people of Egypt with such horror, that they murmuringly requested the king, at last to dismiss the Israelites; for the land was already ruined.—We have a variety of faithful and interesting descriptions of these insects, their wanderings, their desolations, and their destruction; but there is none comparable in accuracy of observation and sublimity of poetical delineation, with the exalted picture which the prophet Joel gives in the two first chapters of his prophecies. We shall, therefore, subjoin here some extracts from that description; and we deem this to be the more properly illustrative of our passage, as the one has indeed the character of a more detailed explanation of the other (compare Joel i. 2, and Exodus x. 6; Joel i. 3, and Exodus x. 2, etc.); and we shall then add such other information as might besides be necessary for the illustration of our text. In the translation of these poetical portions, we have been guided by the same principles which we have generally adopted in this part of our labour. Joel i. 6: "For a nation is come upon my land, mighty and numberless, whose teeth are the teeth of a

lion, and it hath the bite of a lioness. Ver. 7. It hath laid my vine waste, and broken my fig-tree; it hath barked it bare, and cast it down; white are its tendrils. Ver. 10. The fold is desolated; the land mourneth; for the corn is destroyed; the new wine is dried up; the oil is withered. Ver. 11. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; lament, O ye vine-dressers, for the wheat and for the barley; for perished is the harvest of the field. Ver. 15. Woe to the day! for the day of the Lord is near, and as a destruction from the Almighty doth it come. Ver. 17. The seeds are rotten under their clods, the garners are desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. Ver. 18. How do the beasts groan! in consternation are the herds of cattle, because there is no pasture for them; the flocks of sheep also are perished. II. 1, 2. The day of the Lord cometh; it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness. As the morning spreads over the mountains; so great is the people and strong; never hath there been any like it, neither shall there be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. Ver. 3. A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth; the

them; 2. And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in

land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; and nothing can escape them. Ver. 4. Their appearance is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen so they run. Ver. 5. Like the noise of chariots they leap over the summits of mountains; like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble; like a strong army arrayed for battle. Ver. 6. Before them the people trembleth; every countenance groweth pale with horror. Ver. 7. They run like heroes, they climb the wall like warriors; and they march every one its way, and they change not their ranks. Ver. 8. One presseth not the other; they walk every one in its path; and through weapons they pass and break not their lines. Ver. 9. They stray about in the city; they run upon walls; they ascend into the houses; they enter at the windows like a thief. Ver. 10. Before them quaketh the earth, tremble the heavens; the sun and the moon grow dark, and the stars withhold their splendour."—And if you sincerely repent (ver. 20): "I shall remove far from you the northern army, and shall drive it into a land barren and desolate, with its van towards the eastern sea, and with its rear towards the western sea; and its fetid smell shall ascend, and its odours shall rise up, because it hath done so great things."—It will not be uninteresting to compare herewith the description of a modern traveller, which confirms the Biblical picture in every essential point. Volney (*Trav.* i. p. 235) writes: "With Egypt, Persia, and almost the whole of southern Asia, Syria has a fearful plague in common, namely, those clouds of locusts, of which almost all travellers report. Everybody, except an eye-witness, must deem the enormous quantity of these insects quite incredible; the ground is covered with them for several leagues. The noise which they cause when devouring leaves and grass, is heard at a considerable distance, and seems like the noise of an

army foraging in secret. It is certainly much better to fall in with the Tartars, than with these little all-devouring creatures; it might almost be said, that fire accompanies them. Where their swarms appear, everything green vanishes momentarily from the fields, as if a curtain is rolled up; the trees and plants stand leafless, and nothing is seen but naked boughs and stalks, and thus the dreary image of winter follows rapidly on the variegated exuberance of spring. If these locust-clouds move on, in order to fly over an obstacle, which stands in the way of their voraciousness, or still more rapidly, over a waste soil, it can literally be said, that the sky is obscured by them. It is a consolation, that this plague does not occur often, for there is nothing which produces so invariably famine and disease."—We subjoin, besides, a brief extract from the account of Denon, which offers several important analogies with the relation of our text: "Two days later (after the burning south-wind had begun to blow) we were informed, that the plain was covered with birds, which proceeded like one solid body from east to west. Seen from a distance, the field appeared to be in motion, or at least a long stream appeared to flow through the plain. Believing that these were birds of migration, which thus passed by in very great numbers, we hastened towards that direction to observe them. But instead of birds, we found a cloud of locusts which denuded the field, devouring every blade of grass, and not leaving the spot before it was perfectly stripped of every vegetation. As active, as lively and eager as the Bedouins, they are, like them, children of the desert. After the wind had turned, and became contrary to their flight, they were driven back into the desert."—We shall now introduce some other remarks on the character of this plague. The locust (*ἀκρίς*, *gryllus gregarius*, *locusta*, *Pliny*, ix. 50), has four wings, mostly green or yellowish, spring-

Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that you may know that I am the Lord. 3. And Moses

feet, and attains a length of about five inches. It has a green thorax, with a much elevated ridge or crest on it, blunted head, red-brown eyes, and antennae about three quarters of an inch long. Their teeth are extremely sharp and strong, and the four teeth of the two jaws cross each other like the two parts of a pair of scissors; and hence they are compared by the prophet Joel with the teeth of a lion. The Arabs, rich and lively as their imagination is, express the terror with which these insects fill them, in several hyperbolic similes. They compare the head of the locust to that of the horse; its breast to that of the lion; its feet to those of the camel; its body to that of the serpent; and its tail to that of the scorpion. When they breed, which is in the month of October, they make a hole in the ground with their tails, and having laid 300 eggs in it, and covered them with their feet, expire; for they never live above six months and a half. Neither rain nor frost, however long and severe, can destroy their eggs; they continue till spring, and, hatched by the heat of the sun, the young locusts issue from the earth about the middle of April. They often cover the ground for the space of several leagues to the depth of four, sometimes of six or seven inches. A swarm, which was observed in India in 1825, occupied a space of forty English square miles, contained at least forty millions of locusts in one line, and cast a long shadow on the earth. And Major Moore thus describes an immense army of these animals which ravaged the Mahratta country: "The column they composed extended five hundred miles; and so compact was it when on the wing, that like an eclipse, it completely hid the sun, so that no shadow was cast by any object." Brown, in his Travels in Africa, states that an area of nearly two thousand square miles was literally covered by them; and Kirby and Spence mention that a column of them was so immense,

that they took four hours to fly over the spot where the observer stood. The approach of their swarms is announced by a yellow reflex in the skies, which arises from their yellow wings. If the rays of the sun shine upon them, the earth itself assumes a yellow colour. After they have converted the land into a desert, they proceed in their flight, but leave behind them their eggs, and their excrements, which cause a detestable smell. Remarkable is the extraordinary order and regularity of their swarms. "They fly," says Jerome, "after the will of the all-governing Deity, with such order, that they keep their place like the figures made by the hand of the artist on a pavement, and never in the least deviate to the right or to the left." They fly always in a straight onward direction, mostly northwards, but not always (see on ver. 13). Sometimes they penetrate even into the houses; they fly into the mouths of the inmates; they throw themselves on the food; they gnaw leather and even wood. It has been unsuccessfully tried to keep them off or to repel them by pits and ditches, crying, drums, smoke, and even soldiers. But though all these devices fail, these formidable insects have a most powerful enemy in certain birds, called *samarmer*, greatly resembling the wood-pecker, which seem to have a natural antipathy to the locusts, for they do not only devour great numbers of them, but destroy them in large quantities, whence they are regarded as great benefactors by the peasants, who never venture to kill or injure one of them. But still more fatal to the locusts are the southerly winds, which drive them over the sea, on which they sit down as on firm ground, or into which they fall, unable to continue their flight on account of damp vapours or rain. But even in their destruction they are a curse to men; for their dead carcasses, cast on the shore by the wind, and putrifying on the ground, exhale such pestilential effluvia,

and Aaron came to Pharaoh, and said to him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me. 4. ¹For, if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, to-morrow shall I bring the locusts in thy ²boundaries: 5. And they shall cover the face of the earth, so that it will be impossible to see the earth; and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which is left to you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field. 6. And they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; which neither thy fathers have seen, since the day that they were ³in the land to this day. And he turned, and went out from Pharaoh. 7. And Pharaoh's servants said to him, How long shall this man

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Else, if.

² Coast.

³ Upon the earth.

that many thousand persons have perished from this cause. Augustine mentions a pestilence produced by dead locusts, which destroyed the lives of about 800,000 people of Numidia, and many more in the countries bordering on the coast. They are, however, in the East, extensively used for food, prepared in various ways, and often preferred to the finest fish. Four kinds of them are allowed for food in the dietetic laws of Moses (Lev. xi. 22).—These facts will convey some idea of the formidable character of these insects, whose awful desolations were not unknown to the Egyptians (ver. 14), but which were now brought over the land in unparalleled numbers as a fearful plague, more formidable than boils and hail, and well calculated to terrify both the people and the king of Egypt; because it was not only disastrous in itself, but also in its dire consequence of famine and pestilence.—The reason why God allowed Pharaoh to harden his heart is here stated similarly as in ix. 16, in order to show him His whole power, and to reveal His might to later generations.

5. *And they shall eat the residue, etc.* The words “every tree which groweth for you out of the field,” have

misled many interpreters to suppose a long interval between this plague and the preceding one of hail, which they assert, had so completely destroyed the vegetation, that the circle of another year was required to produce new herbs and trees to serve as a prey to the locusts. However, 1st. we have already observed that expressions like “all grass of the field” must not be urged too literally (ix. 25); 2nd. The wheat and the spelt had not been affected by the hail, because they were not yet sufficiently advanced; a few weeks sufficed to make them welcome food for the voracity of the locusts; 3rd. As the hail-storm took place in the beginning of March (see note on ix. 31, 32), the fruit-trees were, to a great extent, still in a backward state, and might, soon afterwards, have put forth their blossoms; 4th. The whole picture which the sacred text draws of the ten plagues, shows distinctly, that they occurred all in rapid succession, at the most in the course of one year (see note on vii. 20, 21).

6. *And he (Moses) turned and went out with his brother Aaron (ver. 3).*

7. The servants of Pharaoh, that is, his magicians, were now convinced, if not of the disposing Providence, at least of the

be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God: dost thou not yet know that Egypt is ruined? 8. And Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh: and he said to them, Go, serve the Lord your God: *but who are they that will go?* 9. And Moses said, With our young and with our old will we go, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we have a feast to the Lord. 10. And he said to them, So may the Lord be with you as I shall let you go and your children: ⁴see, that you have evil *plans* before you. 11. Not so: go now, you men, and serve the Lord; for that have you desired. And they were driven from the presence of Pharaoh.

12. And the Lord said to Moses, Stretch out thy hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may

⁴ *Engl. Vers.*—Look to it, for evil is before you.

unlimited might, of the God of Israel; and this confession is the first great triumph of truth in this grand and majestic combat between the light of religion and the darkness of superstition: and even Pharaoh yields to a certain degree.

9. The detailed enumeration of all classes of the people, and of their property, and the repetition of *we will go*, bears the character of manly and determined firmness: “we must go all, with our cattle,” *for we have a feast to the Lord*. This request cannot have been unexpected to Pharaoh, as we know that the Egyptians celebrated frequently such general festivals in the wilderness (see note on v. i; compare Herodotus, ii. 58; and note on xii. 16).

10, 11. Pharaoh, however, is so irritated by this demand, that his malevolent mind spontaneously discloses itself; he declares, undisguisedly, what wishes he harbours for the fate of the Israelites, and expels Moses and Aaron from his palace; “for,” said he “*see that you have evil plans before you*,” that is, now it is clearly evident that you have treacherous intentions. This sense has already been expressed by the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and Luther; and most

of the modern expositors have adopted this interpretation. But Onkelos renders thus: “Behold, the evil which you intend to do, will turn back upon your face;” and Ebn Ezra: “the evil, that is, your destruction, is near to you, and before your eyes,” which is less adapted to the context (so also Brown: “you are hastening to your ruin”). Vater translates: “May the Lord be so with you as I shall let you go; but as to your children, see, you intend evil.” But besides the strange separation of “you” and “your children,” the first part of the sentence would contain a blessing little in harmony with the violent expulsion of Moses and Aaron immediately following. — Pharaoh urges the word *serve*, which Moses had always used in requesting the departure of the Israelites (vii. 16, 26; viii. 16, 23; ix. 1, 13), and which appears to include the *men* only. He is, therefore, inclined to allow the latter to go, “for that only have you desired,” forgetting that Moses had just reminded him that it is a festival which they intended to celebrate to the Lord, and which required the presence of *all* members of the community (Deut. xvi. 10, 11, etc.: “thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and

come upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, every *thing* which the hail hath left. 13. And Moses stretched forth his staff over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all *that* night; *and* when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. 14. And the locusts came over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the boundaries of Egypt, a very heavy *plague*; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such. 15. For they covered the surface of the whole land, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which

thy maid-servant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the orphan, and the widow, *all* who are in thy gates").

13. *The Lord brought an east-wind upon the land and the east-wind brought the locusts.* It has frequently been asserted, that an east-wind could not have brought the locusts into Egypt: 1st. Because these insects always wander in a straight direction from south to north; and 2nd. Because they cannot well fly over the water, and they would, therefore, have perished in the Red Sea before reaching Egypt. But as to the first objection, we remark, that although the swarms of locusts *frequently* move from south to north, so that if they come from Arabia Petræa they generally take their way through Palestine, Syria, Karamania, Natolia, etc.: they do not exclusively go in that direction, but are, in this respect, perfectly dependent on the wind which happens to blow. It has been sufficiently proved, that the locusts *come with every wind* (see *Credner*, on Joel, p. 286). In Arabia, it is generally taken as granted, that the locusts always come from the east, and the Arabians say, therefore, that they are bred by the water of the Persian Gulf (*Burckhardt*, Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys, p. 268). The second objection is as little founded, since authentic travellers have reported that the locusts do not only fly over narrow parts of the sea, as the straits of

Gibraltar, or the Red Sea, but even over great distances, as the Mediterranean, if they are borne by a gentle wind (see *Credner*, p. 288; *Niebuhr*, Deser. p. 169); and a Syrian writer* observes: "In the year 1463, very many locusts came from the East, they reached Egypt, where they devoured all herbs, etc." It is, therefore, neither necessary to translate here *south-wind* (*Samum*, with the Septuagint, Vulgate, Bochart, Rosenmüller, and others), nor to *understand* it, with Philippson, as that wind, and to suppose: "that we have here an inaccuracy of the language." The reason adduced by Bochart, that locusts are more numerous in Ethiopia than in Arabia, and that given by Rosenmüller, that the verb *to come up* (ver. 14), is generally used with regard to movements from the south to the north (see on i. 10), are of little weight, for it is universally known, that the locusts which come from Arabia, are, by their enormous quantities, a real plague; and the expression "the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt," signifies only their appearing in large numbers over the whole country (see viii. 1, 2).

14. *Before then there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such,* which appeared to many contradictory with the passage in Joel (ii. 2), where it is similarly said, that there has never been, nor will there ever be a plague of locusts like that. If we really will pedantically weigh the syllables of a

the hail had left; and there remained not any *thing* green in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt. 16. Then Pharaoh hastened to call for Moses and Aaron, and he said, I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. 17. Now, therefore, forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and entreat the Lord your God, that He may remove from me this death only. 18. And he went out from Pharaoh and entreated the Lord. 19. And the Lord turned a very strong west-wind, which bore away the locusts, and cast them into the Red Sea; there remained not one locust in all the boundaries of Egypt. 20. But the Lord hardened

poetical phrase, the seeming discrepancy might in the easiest manner be reconciled by the remark, that here the expression refers to Egypt, and in Joel to Palestine (Kimchi, Ebn Ezra, Rashi, and others, believe that here the quantity, and in Joel the number of the different species is unparalleled. See, however, Ps. lxxviii. 46, and cv. 34). About similar and almost proverbial hyperbolic phrases compare 2 Kings xviii. 5, and xxiii. 25. Hasselquist (Tr. p. 254), observes: "that Egypt is never visited by the locusts;" and others infer from it, that "the strangeness of the occurrence, contrary to the well-known habits of the creatures, betokened the interposition of Almighty power in bringing that plague upon the land" (Jamieson). But that assertion is not correct. For Niebuhr (Descript. of Arabia, p. 168), states, that during his stay in Kairo, the first great swarm of locusts arrived there towards the end of December, in the year 1761, and a still more formidable one on the 9th of January, of the following year. They came with a south-west wind, and, therefore, probably, from the Libyan desert. Then, not the occurrence itself, but its extraordinary character formed the miracle.

15. About the faithfulness of this description, and the vast desolations caused by the locusts, see on ver. 1.

16, 17. Pharaoh is again compelled to bend his pride, to acknowledge his sin,

and to request the interference of Moses before God for the removal of the plague.

19. *And the Lord turned a very strong west-wind.* Although the locusts are borne by a *gentle* wind over long tracts of the sea (see ver. 13), they invariably become the victims of a heavy gale, which makes them almost instantaneously sink into the waves, whence they are driven to the coasts, infesting the air with pestilence. — The Arabian gulf is called "the Sea of Weeds, or Bul-rushes" (*Sari*, *Alga Nilotica*, see note on ii. 3), because it is said to abound in these plants (*Strabo*, xvi. p. 773, Cas.). We may, however, add, that Bruce, an accurate and veracious reporter of his eastern travels, maintains, that he noticed no weed of any kind in the Red Sea, and that such plants cannot be expected in a narrow gulph, under the immediate influence of the monsoons, blowing from contrary points six months each year, and causing too much agitation to produce such vegetables, seldom found but in stagnant water, and still more seldom, if ever, growing in sweet ones. His opinion is, therefore, that it is from the large trees or plants, of *white coral*, perfectly in imitation of plants on land, that the sea has taken its name. But if his observations in this respect are correct, we must suppose that the gulf of Suez, which has in the course of time undergone considerable changes, has suffered similar modifi-

Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.

21. And the Lord said to Moses, Stretch out thy hand towards heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, ¹so that they may grope in darkness. 22. And Moses stretched forth his hand towards heaven, and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. 23. They saw not one another, neither rose any man from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. 24. And Pharaoh

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Even darkness which may be felt.

cations with regard to its vegetable productions; for the name "Sea of Bulrushes," and the identity of *Sup^h* are too unques-

tionable, to admit of any uncertainty (see note on xiii. 20).

NINTH PLAGUE. DARKNESS. VER. 21—29.

21. Before the final and most fearful judgment, God strikes the Egyptians with a plague intended to awe their senses and to impress their minds with the majestic grandeur of the Almighty, rather than to operate fatally or destructively; it is, indeed, a worthy preparation for the mighty strokes which were soon to fall upon the unhappy country. The Egyptians worshipped Osiris as the god of the sun or of day; a palpable darkness obscured his rays; he was unable to dispel it; and he was thus proved to be powerless compared with the God of Israel. Even darkness was holy to them; but it came now in such unnatural and unexpected form, that the object of their worship became to them an object of horror. But this plague also had a natural basis; and its miraculous character is to be sought in the unusual extent of the phenomenon and the exemption of the Israelites from its effects (ver. 23). About the beginning of April—the time of our wonder—the fearful hot wind, known under the name of Samum or Chamsin, commences to blow in Egypt and Arabia, and is always attended with a thickness of the air, which allows the sun only to throw a dim, yellow light upon the earth, and which not unfre-

quently causes even complete, dreary darkness, filling the inhabitants with dismay and consternation. On such occasions the people in the towns and villages shut themselves up in their houses, in the undermost rooms or vaults; the tenants of the deserts hide themselves in caverns or pits, which they dig in the earth. There they await, with anxious suspense, the end of this dangerous tempest, which generally lasts *three days* (see ver. 22). The streets are, during this time, perfectly empty, and a deep silence reigns everywhere as during the night. Du Bois Aymé (*Déscrip. de l'Égypte* viii. p. 110) writes: "When the Chamsin blows, the sun has a pale yellow colour; his light is veiled, and darkness reaches sometimes such a degree, that it appears to be the most gloomy night; as we experienced it about the middle of the day at Kene, a city of the Saïd." We possess further accounts of complete darkness in Egypt: Thus writes Dschemaleddin in his *Chronicle*: "Under the reign of Mostali-Billah, king of Egypt (about the end of the 11th century), a great and violent storm, accompanied by black darkness, arose; houses were overthrown and trees uprooted; but the darkness was so intense,

called for Moses, and said, Go you, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your children also go with you. 25. And Moses said, Thou must give into our hands also sacrifices and burnt-offerings, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God. 26. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not one hoof remain behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not *with* what we must serve the Lord until we come thither. 27. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. 28. And Pharaoh said to him, Go away from me, take

that everybody thought that the end of the world was approaching." Thus we see that darkness comes generally as a concomitant of tempests, especially the Samum; and from this reason, no doubt, the Sept. Version, whose authors were so well acquainted with the phenomena of Egypt, inserts, "whirlwind," after "thick darkness," in ver. 22.—*So that they may grope in darkness*, quite analogous to Job v. 14, "in the day they grope in darkness." Various are the interpretations offered on these words. Targum Onkel renders freely: "after the darkness of night has receded;" i.e. after the darkness of night another obscuration more dense and gloomy will ensue. Ebn Ezra and others explain: "the darkness will be so thick that it will be felt or palpable." Thus the Sept. (ψηλαφῆτόν σκότος, palpable darkness), and the Vulgate. So also Luther, English Version, Rosenmüller, Salomon, Lengerke, and others. But a darkness which can be felt with the hand, like a solid matter, would be a hyperbolical expression, even too bold for the glowing Oriental phraseology. See the larger edition.

22. Compare the poetical description of this plague in Sap. Sal. xvii. 1—6.

23. *Neither rose any man from his place*, i.e. from his house; but Septuagint: from his bed; which is improbable. Compare xvi. 29.

24. Your flocks and herds shall remain here as a pledge of your return. For the

king naturally suspected the sincerity of Moses' demand; believing, that not merely an absence of three days, for the purpose of sacrificing, but a departure from Egypt for ever was intended. And, therefore, when by the answer of Moses (ver. 26), this conjecture was strengthened in his mind to a certainty, he was resolved rather to suffer the utmost perdition than to yield to a request which he thought was insidiously made to him, and which, if granted, would deprive him of so many thousands of vigorous and useful workmen. We can, therefore, not see with Clarke any particular cruelty on the part of Pharaoh in making the demand, that the cattle should be left behind; for there was, we think, little danger that "the Israelites would, without their flocks, perish from hunger in three days."

25, 26. The sense of these verses is clearly this: it is not sufficient to permit us to go into the desert to celebrate there a festival to our God, but thou must allow us to take with us our cattle to offer to Him sacrifices; and, as we do not know what animals it is right to use for this sacred purpose—this being our first common festival of this kind—we must take *all* our cattle with us; for in the desert only God will teach us the precepts concerning sacrifices.—Ebn Ezra, Rashi, and others, explain artificially: "thou Pharaoh also must give us animals to sacrifice in thy name." About *sacrifices* and *burnt-offerings*, see note on xviii. 12.—*There*

heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in *that* day thou seest my face thou shalt die. 29. And Moses said, Thou hast spoken right, I will see thy face again no more.

shall not a hoof remain behind; a powerful expression signifying nothing at all, no particle of a thing.

29. *I will see thy face again no more*, says Moses to Pharaoh; but before

he leaves the palace, he announces to Pharaoh the last plague (xi. 4, *et seq.*), and leaves him then only in anger (ver. 8), returning but once more by the request of the king himself (xii. 31).

CHAPTER XI.

AND the Lord ¹had said to Moses, One plague more will I bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he will let you

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Said.

1. The close connection between this and the preceding chapter is this: After Pharaoh had threatened Moses with death, if he ventured to appear again before him (x. 28); Moses, already informed by the Lord of the final events now so nearly impending, answered him, that he would willingly obey his commands (ver. 29); but, previous to his departing, he announced to the king the last and most formidable calamity, death of all the first-born of Egypt, and communicated to him the other circumstances—the cries of the Egyptians, the glory of the Hebrews, the wonders of the exodus—with which that event would be accompanied (xi. 4—8). But, in order to acquaint the reader that such revelations had been made by God to Moses, this communication is here parenthetically inserted (ver. 1), and the command concerning the vessels of gold and silver, which God had repeated to Moses simultaneously with that revelation, is naturally added (ver. 2, 3), although it has no immediate bearing upon the subsequent verses. Thus we think the context is clear and coherent, and we require therefore none of the artificial and dissecting conjectures of modern writers, who suppose either that vers. 1—3 and even x. 21—29 are inappropriate fragments which interrupt the connection (so Vater, Schott, De Wette,

Maurer), or that x. 28, 29, are to be placed behind xi. 8 (Houbigant, Townsend), or xii. 1—20 after x. 20 (Townsend), or that the reading of the Samaritan Version of ver. 3 is correct, which has this alteration: “and I shall give the people favour in the eyes of the Egyptians,” so that vers. 1—8 are the announcement of Moses before Pharaoh (as Geddes believes). The interpolations of the Samaritan codex are here the more suspicious, just because they affect a greater simplicity and clearness; and the remark of Clarke, that “some passages might have been omitted because an ancient copyist found the substance of them in other places,” is scarcely reconcilable with the anxious scrupulousness with which that commentator usually adheres to the sacred text. He scarcely allows a metaphor; he takes “the earth swallowed them,” in xv. 12, literally as an earthquake; the words: “the enemy said,” in ver. 9, are to him a proof that Pharaoh really uttered the following sentences, etc. We take, therefore, the verb, with Ebn Ezra, as pluperfect: *and God had said to Moses*. Others (Rashbam, etc.) explain: God spoke to Moses whilst he stood before Pharaoh; for the revelation came suddenly upon him. But this is at least unnecessary.—*When he will let you go, he will surely drive you away hence altogether*, that is, he will drive you entirely and

go, he will surely drive you away hence altogether. 2. Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man ²ask of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, ³articles of silver, and articles of gold. 3. And the Lord gave the people favour in the eyes of the Egyptians. Moreover, the man Moses *was* very great in the land of Egypt, in the eyes of Pharaoh's servants, and in the eyes of the people. 4. And Moses said, Thus saith the Lord, About midnight shall I go out into the midst of Egypt. 5. And all the firstborn in the

² *Engl. Vers.*—Borrow.

³ Jewels.

in haste out of the land, so that he will with the same impetuosity wish you to depart for ever, as he now pertinaciously strives to retain you (see vi. 1).

2. *Speak now*, etc. About this command see note on iii. 22.

3. *And the Lord gave the people favour in the eyes of the Egyptians.* Our verse partly contains the reason, why the departing Hebrews would receive rich presents from their old neighbours, and partly alludes to the result with which the command of God would be attended at the time of the Exodus (xii. 36).—The reason is twofold: 1. The Egyptians were favourably inclined towards the Hebrews (see on iii. 21), no doubt because the latter had proved faithful and obliging neighbours, and because their unequalled sufferings inspired even the hearts of the idolators with sympathy and compassion; and 2. The authority of Moses was paramount throughout all Egypt; because it was evident that he was the messenger and prophet of a God by far more powerful than any of the Egyptian deities, and because no doubt his modesty and unassuming conduct in the midst of the stupendous miracles he wrought, filled the Egyptians with admiration for the rare qualities of his character. With historical faithfulness and unaffected simplicity Moses makes these remarks about his own person; they are historical facts; and he relates them with the same objective impartiality, with which, for in-

stance, Xenophon speaks of himself in the *Anabasis*, or Cæsar in his *Commentaries*. Besides, these words are merely added to give an additional reason for the willingness with which the Egyptians loaded the departing Israelites with presents. These reasons were, then, fourfold: 1. The Egyptians' fear of further plagues; 2. The interference of God, who inclined their hearts towards the strangers; 3. The friendship which had long existed between the Egyptian people and the Hebrews; and 4. The extraordinary power which Moses had displayed, and which they felt assured, could only be imparted by preternatural influence. See note on iii. 21, 22. — These facts are not unimportant for the true historical estimation of the oppressions which the Hebrews suffered in Egypt, as they evidently show, that the cruelty of the Egyptian *king*, not the aversion of the *nation*, enacted the tyrannical measures against them; and that at least a large portion of the Egyptians became now impressed with the surpassing grandeur of the God of Israel. They enriched them, therefore, with presents, not merely from motives of fear, or a selfish desire to be freed of their ominous presence, but because they began to be imbued with a deep feeling of respect and awe for a nation so evidently favoured by an omnipotent and all-governing God.

5. All the firstborn of Egypt shall die, from the son of the king, *who sits on the*

land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sitteth upon the throne, to the firstborn of the handmaid who *is* behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. 6. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. 7. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog sharpen his tongue, against man or beast; that you may know that the Lord distinguisheth between

throne (not who will once sit on the throne), to the son of the meanest and most despised servant in the kingdom, or as it is worded here, *to the firstborn of the handmaid, who is behind the mill*, which is in xii. 29, expressed, *to the firstborn of the captive*; for the toilsome and degrading task of grinding corn on handmills was imposed upon the lowest persons, and especially on captives and slaves. This was, for instance, the fate of Samson after he had fallen into the hands of the Philistines (Judg. xvi. 21). Isaiah (xlvii. 1, 2) describes the conquered Babylon under the picture of a captive virgin, and says, among other similar traits, "take the millstones and grind flour." The hand-mills of the ancient Egyptians were most probably quite similar to those at present in use among their descendants and among the wandering Arabs. They were found in every house, and formed so indispensable a household-utensil, that the Hebrew lawgiver expressly interdicted to take them as a pledge for debts (Deut. xxiv. 6). The Bedouins carry them in all their wanderings with them. It seems to have been a universal custom in antiquity that only women worked them; for not only was this the case among the Egyptians and Arabs, but also among the Greeks (*Homer*, *Od.* vii. 104); and the women were, during this process, usually seated on the bare ground. Now those hand-mills are simply two circular flat stones, generally about eighteen inches in diameter, the lower one fixed, the upper turning loosely upon a wooden pivot, or shaft, rising from the centre of that beneath it, and moved quickly round by a wooden handle. The grain is poured

through the hole of the pivot, and the flour is collected in a cloth spread under the mill. The ancient Egyptians had also larger mills, usually of granite, constructed on a similar principle, and probably turned by oxen or asses. The stone used for the hand-mills was hard grit, probably taken from the mountains of the Mokuttum, near Kairo. (See *Wilkinson*, *Manners*, ii. 118; *Layard*, *Discoveries in Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 287).—In the whole Orient, the firstborn son enjoyed, besides a greater personal authority, real and material privileges. After the father's death he received a double portion of the inheritance (Deut. xxi. 17), and was the guardian of his younger unmarried brothers and sisters; as the "firstling of the father's strength" (Genesis xlix. 3), he was considered superior: and it was forbidden to transfer the right of primogeniture upon a younger son (Deut. xxi. 16). The death of the first-born caused, therefore, in every family the deepest grief; and with this unusual calamity all the houses of Egypt are now threatened.—Even the firstborn of beasts shall be killed to complete the misery of the Egyptians, and to make this plague the more manifestly a divine visitation, since it is well-known, that a very considerable number of animals were worshipped as gods, who were thus suddenly annihilated, together with a great portion of that nation, which had lavished unavailing honours upon their idle service.

6. We need scarcely remind the reader, that in the East the manifestations of grief and mourning at the loss of beloved relatives are of a far more violent character

the Egyptians and between Israel. 8. And all these thy servants shall come down to me, and shall bow down themselves to me, saying, Go out, thou and all the people that follow thee: and after that I shall go out.—And he went out from Pharaoh in burning anger.

9. And the Lord ¹had said before to Moses, Pharaoh ²will not hearken to you, that my wonders may be mul-

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Said.

² Shall.

than in our countries; and there is sometimes an impetuosity in those lamentations which is attended with all conceivable forms of self-castigation: the men tear out the hair of the head and the beard; strew ashes upon their heads; throw themselves into the dust; tear their garments, and not seldom lacerate their faces and bodies; they fast; remove every ornament; they formerly hired even mourning women (Jeremiah ix. 16), who, like those of the Greeks and Romans, recited, during the days of mourning, in the houses and at the graves, loud and woeful dirges. If we add hereto the fact, that the Egyptians were especially inconsolable and seized with deep consternation at the death of any of their sacred animals, many of which were struck by the pestilence (ver. 5); we shall scarcely find the expression of our text exaggerated, "that there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more."

7. *But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog sharpen his tongue against man or beast*, that is, nobody, even not the meanest of their enemies shall attack or insult them; they will leave Egypt free and unmolested. Michaelis explains most forcedly: "But to any of the children of Israel shall not a dog let his tongue hang out of his throat for pain or illness;" which interpretation, however, is irreconcilable with the words immediately following *from man to beast*. Not more acceptable is the exposition of Clarke, who takes our words partly literally, the house-dogs will not, according to their natural instinct, bark presaging the death of their masters by

their cries; and partly mythologically, their sacred God *Anubis latrator* (son of Osiris) would not bark, but be silent, not indicating to them the flight of their enemies.—The same proverbial phrase occurs in Joshua x. 21.

8. *And all these thy servants shall come to me*, namely, from the palace. The word *to descend*, is, as Rosenmüller observes, used, not because the royal palace is situated on a higher elevation, but because, according to the Hebrew idiom, going from a nobler place to one of less distinction, is called descending to it; and thus kings, or royal officers, *descend* from the palace to private houses.—*And all the people that follow thee*. Moses was, in consequence of his supernatural miracles, and the veneration in which he was held by the Hebrews, considered by Pharaoh as the prince of the people, although the humility of Moses never led him to attempt civil or political authority, merely governing by the superiority of his intellect, and the infallibility of the divine inspiration under which he acted.—*And Moses went out from Pharaoh in burning anger*. Now Moses only left Pharaoh's palace not to appear again before him on his own accord (x. 29).

9, 10. The transactions before Pharaoh are finished; God had shown to the refractory monarch the infinitude of His power, without using it to a disastrous destruction of the Egyptians; this terrible catastrophe has now become inevitable by the inflexible obstinacy of the king: it is the culminating point in the soul-stirring tragedy narrated in our text, and with admirable skill, the inspired author, as if following the strict rules of artistic

tiplied in the land of Egypt. 10. And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

composition, allows, before the real occurrence of the overwhelming event, a momentary pause, consisting in the standstill of the action, to refresh and to strengthen the mind of the reader for the last terrible blow. This is effected by the two following verses, in which all that has hitherto happened to Pharaoh is again summarily repeated, and the result of all the miracles wrought before him briefly stated. There is thus no progress in the narration intended, and the words:

"and the Lord had said to Moses," are therefore, to be understood of the previous revelations of God to Moses (Pluperfect, as ver. 1), not of a new communication, as Rashi observes; and the words: "that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt," refer to the past miracles, although they include also those which it is still intended to perform for the deliverance and glory of Israel and the punishment of the arbitrary and contumacious king.

CHAPTER XII.

SUMMARY.—Before the final and decisive stroke, which forced Pharaoh to allow the departure of the Israelites, God commanded, through Moses, the laws connected with this miraculous event, and the ceremonies to be celebrated in commemoration thereof: the institution of the month of Abib as the first of the religious year; precepts regarding the selecting, killing, roasting and eating of the paschal-lamb; further, concerning the use of unleavened bread from the fifteenth to the twenty-first day of Abib, and respecting the persons who are to be admitted to the paschal-lamb (see a survey of these rites in the notes on verse 1).—Then, on the fourteenth of Nisan, in the evening, while the Israelites were consuming the prescribed meal, all the first-born of Egypt, both men and beasts, are destroyed by a pestilence, to the great consternation of the Egyptians, and of Pharaoh, who now presses the departure of the Israelites with such eagerness that they had no time to leaven their bread. They left Egypt laden with the costly presents of the Egyptians, accompanied by many others not belonging to their nation. The first station to which they came was Succoth, south-east of Rameses, towards the coast of the Red Sea.

THE FEAST OF PASSOVER. VER. I.

THE precepts concerning the celebration of the festival of Passover constitute the first of the Mosaic Laws, and the only one given in Egypt. Both the connection in which it is introduced, and the force with which it is enjoined, and the supplementary ordinances, which the legislator adds in the course of the Pentateuch, are unmistakable proofs of the paramount importance which is attached to that extraordinary festival.

a. The connection of the context in which the Passover is enforced, shows that it is intended as a symbol of the *national covenant* between God and Israel. This is manifest from the precepts that the paschal-lamb is to be eaten in the family circle, or, if this be too small to represent the national unity, together with another family besides (vers. 3, 4); from the express injunction that "the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel" shall kill it (ver. 6); from the otherwise singular precept, that the lamb is not to be dissected, but roasted with the head and the legs and the entrails (ver. 9, compare ver. 46), as a representation of the wholeness or unity of Israel; and especially from the circumstances, that the revelation of the Law stands in

immediate connection with the Exodus (for Pentecost is called the feast of conclusion to Passover, see on xxiii. 16), that only circumcised individuals are permitted to partake of the paschal-lamb (ver. 48), and that this is to be killed in Jerusalem only, at the temple, the great centre of the national unity of the Israelites (Deut. xvi. 5—7). The law concerning Passover, is, in this respect, analogous to that of circumcision, which is to be considered as an *individual covenant* between God and every single Israelite (see *infra* on xx. 8). The latter was given to one man at a time, when this one individual only acknowledged and worshipped God; the former was enjoined at a period when the adorers of the true God had increased to a numerous nation, and were on the point of being vested with political independence, and of being led, *as a nation*, to a great and fertile land, to inhabit it as their exclusive inheritance. From this point of view the character of Passover, as a festival of liberty or redemption, is self-evident, although only accessory. The deliverance of Israel from Egyptian thralldom is only the negative element in that memorable event; the closer relation with God, into which Israel as a people is brought thereby, forms its positive and more important characteristic: they *ceased* to be physically slaves, and *began* to become spiritually the messengers of divine truth; whilst the one tended only to diminish their external woe, the other was calculated to free their minds from the fetters of superstition and ignorance, to enlighten their intellects, to ennoble their souls, and, in a word, to render them worthy to be the “chosen people” of the Almighty.

b. A not less obvious proof of the importance of this great initiatory festival, is the *force* with which it is enjoined. Its solemnisation is not only repeatedly, emphatically, and even pathetically enforced, but any one who disregards any of its more essential precepts is threatened with the solemn and awful punishment, “that his soul shall be cut off from Israel,” not by earthly authorities, but by the divine Judge himself (see Levit. xx. 5, 6); or, with other words, those who neglect the precepts connected with the festival of the national covenant between God and Israel, cease, *eo ipso*, to belong to that privileged community, because they disavow that which is the sign and fundamental condition of the covenant; as those who neglect the circumcision (at which the same phrase is used) have individually destroyed their union with God. Passover is the natal day of Israel’s political existence; it is the commencement of its historical vocation, the transition from individual degradation to national glory, the primary condition of its elevation to a holy people, and, therefore, in its innermost purport, closely kindred with the sanctity of Sabbath, which is, indeed, in the Decalogue, based on the deliverance from Egyptian thralldom (compare Isa. xliii. 1, 15—17; Deut. v. 12—17). Hence the inexorable severity with which the laws of Passover are enforced; they concern not single accessory precepts, but the very root of Mosaism in its historical genesis.

c. But the legislator, in order to impress the significance of this festival still more energetically, returns to it on different occasions anew, in order to give such additional prescriptions as might be required for its most appropriate and acceptable celebration. However, none of those supplementary laws are superfluous additions (as has been advanced by those critics who see a variety of authors in the Pentateuch), but essential injunctions, in perfect harmony with the primary law on Passover, in the following manner: 1st. xii. 1—20, contains the fundamental laws which God communicated to Moses concerning the paschal-lamb, its preparation, the manner in which it is to be eaten, and the use of unleavened bread. 2nd. In ver. 21—28, Moses informs his co-religionists of the precepts concerning the paschal-lamb, and the use which was at that time to be made of the blood. 3rd. Verses 43—49 specify the individuals who are allowed to participate in the lamb, and who not. 4th. In xiii. 3—10 Moses communicates to the people the precepts of the unleavened bread. 5th. In xxiii. 15, is a brief allusion to the preceding laws of Passover, the mention of which could not entirely be omitted in the enumeration of the preliminary laws contained in chap. xxi. to

xxiii, constituting a little whole for themselves, and embodying, in a brief but distinct sketch, the principal statutes of the holy code (see *infra*, note on xxi. 1, beginning). 6th. xxxiv. 18, forms a part of the renewal of the divine covenant with Israel, which had been destroyed by the sin of the golden calf. 7th. In Levit. xxiii. 4—8, Passover is mentioned in its due place in the system of Hebrew festivals, and ver. 9—14 contains the regulations about the firstlings. 8th. Numb. ix. 1—14 embodies the law concerning those who were, in the first month of the year, by some cause, prevented from duly celebrating the Passover; and the general character of the festival is briefly premised only in order the easier to introduce that additional law. 9th. Numb. xxviii. 16—25 describes the sacrifices to be offered on Passover. 10th. Deut. xvi. 5—7 ordains, that the festival is to be celebrated by the whole nation at the common sanctuary.

It is needless to add, with what importance tradition hallowed the sanctity of Passover, which complicated system of laws rabbinical interpretation has erected on the basis of the Biblical precepts, and with what scrupulous conscientiousness its prescriptions are still observed by the Jewish people, and even by those, who otherwise do not strictly adhere to the ritual injunctions of Mosaism, so that the celebration of Passover, even with the greatest sacrifices, has become a standing proverbial characteristic of the Hebrew nation (for instance, in the sentence: "If the Passover is celebrated in the house, the shouts of joy resound without.") It is thus clear, that Passover was always considered as pre-eminent among the national festivals of Israel, both on account of its political importance, and its solemn religious character. It is considered second to no precept except circumcision; it has the significance of a sacrament; it was formerly the only expiatory sacrifice, which every Israelite could offer personally without the mediation of the priest; thus the paschal-lamb showed manifestly Israel as "a kingdom of priests"; it connected the individual with God, as a member of the chosen community, and with his brethren, as leading to the same divine sovereignty. Those who neglected to pay this annual debt broke off their connection alike with God and their fellow-citizens. Both the Israelites and their enemies were fully impressed with the paramount religious influence, which the due observance of Passover, that cornerstone and basis of the national life of Israel, exercised upon the people. Hezekiah commenced his great religious reform with an invitation to all the tribes of Israel to repair to Jerusalem and to celebrate the festival of unleavened bread; and a perfect change in the religious aspect of the country was the almost immediate consequence (2 Chron. xxx. 1, 5, 13, 26; xxxii. 7, 8). On the other hand, the law of Justinian interdicted the Jews to hold the Passover before the Christians; the laws of Ricared in Spain forbade the Jews to celebrate the Passover on the 14th of any month; this law was, later, renewed and confirmed by the council of Toledo. All these and many similar enactments rooted in the conviction, that if the Jews had only been induced to disregard the precepts of Passover, a total neglect of their other religious rites would gradually ensue and alienate them from the faith of their ancestors.

Before we enter into the different ceremonies connected with this festival, we observe with regard to its name, that *Pesach* was originally only the lamb, which was to be killed and eaten before the exodus, and with the blood of which the door-posts and the lintels of the houses of the Israelites were to be marked, that the destroying angel might "pass over" them and "save" the Israelites. But as the *Pesach* introduces the whole festival, and is undeniably one of its most prominent (if not the most characteristic) features, as the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan is, according to the Hebrew calendar, the beginning of the fifteenth day, and as on that evening unleavened bread also was to be eaten with the paschal-lamb (ver. 8): it is natural, that that name imperceptibly lost its original limited meaning, and was applied for the whole festival of seven days, or of unleavened bread.

It is naturally divided into two parts: 1. The introductory sacrifice, or the *Pesach par excellence*, in the evening of the fourteenth day of Nisan; and 2. The principal

festival, or the feast of unleavened bread from the fifteenth to the twenty-first of the same month.

1. *a*) The Pesach was to be a male lamb or goat, one year old, and without blemish (ver. 5)—the usual requisites in every sacrifice. However, Jewish tradition fixed the use of a *lamb* for this purpose (compare *Theodoret* in Exod. quaest. xxiv). *b*) It was killed in the precincts of the temple (Deut. xvi. 5—7)—certainly a considerable sacrifice for those who lived in the provinces—either by the house-father or a priest, towards the evening before sunset of the fourteenth day of the first month (Deut. xvi. 6), but only after all leaven had been removed from the houses (xxiii. 18). It is undoubtedly a “sacrifice”; it is a peace- and thank-offering; and the annual renewal of the national convention between God and Israel. *c*) It was then roasted entirely without any portion being cut off (ver. 9); and *d*) consumed, in the holy city, by the whole family, either alone or together with other admissible guests, invited to the meal; so that *e*) nothing was left over to the following day; or if this was still the case, it was to be burnt forthwith (ver. 10); the fat especially was forbidden to remain over till the morning (xxiii. 18); *f*) *Bitter herbs*, as a symbol of the severe bondage, which they suffered in Egypt (i. 14); and *unleavened bread*, as an emblem of the haste with which they left the land (ver. 8), were to be eaten with the lamb. It is well known, that Jewish tradition now, since the temple is destroyed and consequently the paschal-lamb cannot be sacrificed, has gradually collected a complete order of service to be observed on the two first evenings of Passover, which contains a brief history of the events connected with the festival, several allegorical rites and copious hymns of praise, mostly Psalms.

2. *a*) The festival itself extended during seven days; under penalty of extirpation, “unleavened bread,” or “bread of misery” (Deut. xvi. 3), was to be eaten (see note on ver. 8). *b*) All leavened bread and leaven were to be removed from the house during that time, under the same severe punishment. *c*) The first and the seventh day are days of holy convocation, celebrated with particular sanctity (ver. 16), like the Sabbath (Lev. xxiii. 11, 15), by abstaining from all work, except that which is indispensable for the preparation of the necessary meals. *d*) On each day certain holocausts (two young bullocks, one ram, seven lambs of the first year) with the necessary meat-offering, together with a sin-offering (one goat, Num. xxviii. 19—24), were offered in the name of the whole nation. Individuals sacrificed also thank-offerings and held convivial repasts (compare Deut. xvi. 2). *e*) In order to combine with this festival a feature of agricultural importance, and thus to enhance its historical or national significance by a more material and immediate personal interest, it was ordered, that on the second day of Passover, a ripe firstling sheaf was to be offered up in the temple, accompanied by a burnt offering (a lamb one year old), and meat- and drink-offerings (Lev. xxiii. 10—14; see notes on xxiii. 14—17); and then only the corn-harvest was universally permitted and commenced (except in some southern parts, as around Jericho, where the harvest was begun before that time, from fear lest the grains fall out of the over-ripe ears. Robinson found the wheat-harvest almost finished in the vicinity of Jericho on the thirteenth of May, the barley-harvest three weeks earlier). Every return of the Passover festival was intended to remind the Israelites of their national regeneration, and of their transition from a scattered state of single-life to a well-founded political unity. Nothing could, therefore, be more appropriate than to bring it into connection with the regeneration of nature and the progress of vernal vegetation. Josephus (Antiq. III. x. 5) describes the offering of the first-fruits in the following manner: “They take a handful of the ears, and dry them, then beat them small, and purge the barley from the bran; they then bring one tenth deal to the altar, to God; and casting one handful of it upon the fire, they leave the rest for the use of the priest; and after this it is, that they may publicly or privately reap their harvest.” It must, however, be observed, that in the festival of

Passover, this agricultural feature is, in significance, decidedly inferior to its historical and religious meaning.—*f*) In the five days between the first and the seventh day of Passover, the assembled multitude indulged no doubt in public amusements, as dances and songs, to fill up the time in harmony with the joyful and solemn character of the festival (Judg. xxi. 21, 23). *g*) Those who were unclean on the fourteenth day of Nisan, or far distant from the temple, or by any other cause precluded from celebrating the Passover, are to solemnise it from the fourteenth day of the second month (Num. ix. 11; 2 Chron. xxx. 2, 15). This is called by the Talmud, "the second Passover," which is to be kept in the same manner as prescribed for the ordinary festival (*Josephus*, Bell. Jud. VI. ix. 3).—About Pentecost, which is to be considered as the necessary conclusion of Passover, especially in the individual, agricultural, and material view, as the festival of the first show-bread, symbolising the perfect completion of the corn-harvest throughout the country, and, according to Jewish tradition, also in the historical, national, and spiritual respect, as the festival of Legislation, see note on xxiii. 16 B.

These general precepts concerning the permanent celebration of Passover (see ver. 14), were necessarily modified at the time of the exodus from Egypt, when that festival was first instituted, and when several features and ceremonies were not symbols, but the necessary results of circumstances. These alterations are: *a*) The paschal-lamb was to be selected already on the tenth of Nisan, in order to allow due time for its proper choice (see on ver. 3). *b*) It was to be killed in the houses of the Israelites by the head of each family; after which a bundle of hyssop was to be dipped in its blood, and the lintel and the door-posts marked with it, both as a guide for the destroying angel, and as a public and open ceremony before the eyes of the Egyptians (vers. 6, 7, 22). According to tradition, this act of marking the door-posts was limited to the Passover in Egypt, and not repeated at its later celebrations, although this appears to be against the clear instructions of Moses, vers. 24—28. (see Ebn Ezra on ver. 24). But as the lambs were, in Palestine, killed at the national sanctuary, the door-posts of the houses could, as a matter of course, not be marked with their blood. *c*) It was to be consumed quickly, and quite in the costume of travellers, "their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their sticks in their hands" (ver. 11). *d*) Unleavened bread was not necessarily eaten during the whole seven days (see Mishn. Pesach. ix. 5), although the Israelites were almost compelled to do so, because they had no time to prepare leavened bread (ver. 39). *e*) The festival lasted only one day, as the departure from Egypt took place already in the night of the fourteenth of Nisan. *f*) The women shared the meal of the paschal-lamb, whereas, later, the men alone were bound to partake of it (xxiii. 17; Deut. xvi. 6—7, 16). *g*) Those who were infected with a levitical impurity were, in Egypt, not excluded from the Pesach, as at that time laws regulating purity and impurity did not yet exist (Num. ix. 6—14). *h*) No firstlings were offered; and *i*) no sacrifices were killed in Egypt, from obvious reasons (Num. xxviii. 16—24).

After such strict and rigid commands concerning the Passover, many thought it a suspicious circumstance, that we find in the historical records of the Old Testament so few direct allusions to its celebration; and they have therefore rashly concluded, that the origin of the Passover is of a far later date than the time of Moses. But against these objections we observe: 1. That history is not required to record the regularly recurring festivals, and that this omission can, therefore, not be used as an argument against the authority of the Pentateuch. But, 2, we find, indeed, a clear mention of Passover in the following passages, *a*) in Josh. v. 10—11, at the arrival of the Israelites in Canaan; *b*) 2 Chron. viii. 13, under Solomon; *c*) 2 Chron. xxx. 15, in the time of Hezekiah; *d*) 2 Kings xxiii. 21, under Josiah; compare 2 Chron. xxxv.; *e*) Ezra vi. 19, 22, after the return from Babylon. If we add hereto the passages, in which the Passover is also probably, though less distinctly, alluded to (Judges vi. 8; xi. 40;

xxi. 19; 1 Sam. i. 3; *Hengstenberg* Auth. ii. p. 79—85): we cannot doubt, that according to the historical evidence of our Biblical records, Passover was celebrated by the Hebrews during the whole period from Moses to the exile, although in different times with more or less strictness and solemnity. We have, therefore, no reason to doubt that the Passover dates from so early a time as that of Moses.

But the contrary opinion, that it was celebrated by the descendants of Abraham, prior to the period of Moses, has as often, and with as much pertinacity, been advanced. Ewald (*Antiq.* p. 356, *et seq.*), mentions the Pesach among the festivals instituted before Moses. Thus other reasons must be assigned for that festival than the exodus from Egypt. Now, it is generally alleged, that the Hebrews, in common with all other Semitic, or, rather, eastern tribes, which, as agricultural nations, are perfectly dependent on the seasons and the course of the celestial orbs, especially the sun, celebrated two principal annual festivals, namely, one at the beginning of the spring, when the corn began to ripen, that is, at the time when the sun "passes over" into the sign of Aries, and this is *Pesach* (analogous to a similar festival celebrated about that time in India, Persia, and Egypt, and called Naurúz, or Huli, or Hilarian, see, however, on ver. 13); and the other at the beginning of the autumn, when the last fruits are gathered in, and the earth assumes a similar important position to the sun; which festival is identical with Succoth; and, in order to show reverence to the moon also, the second great orb, both festivals were celebrated, when it presents to the earth its whole face illuminated. It is added, that, on both occasions the fresh grains of barley were quickly ground the same day, from which flour they baked unleavened bread; or they were merely roasted by the fire, or ground in a mortar; the latter was offered on the altars; the unleavened bread served as food for the people. Herewith an expiatory sacrifice was generally connected, as this was a critical season, deciding either the fertility or barrenness of the year; and this, it is asserted, was the Pesach, or "the passing over," or the "rescue," which shielded from misfortune (as the Egyptians used, at such festivals, to sacrifice a ram to Jupiter Ammon), and with the blood the lintel and the door-posts of the houses were marked, as if to expiate the whole house and its inhabitants (as the ancient Peruvians reddened their temples and houses, in order to symbolise the triumph of the sun over the winter, and his renewed power). The meat was eaten roasted, because it was believed, as is still the case in India, that the eating of raw meat makes human nature savage and blood-thirsty.

We are far from denying the natural historical connection between the Israelites and the other Oriental nations: on the contrary, it is the avowed aim of this commentary always impartially to point out that connection, in order to produce a faithful picture of the general development of the Israelitish institutions; but, although it is not impossible that the Hebrews, before Moses, celebrated similar astrological festivals about the time of the full moon of the first and seventh month—for the majority adhered then to such pagan customs and rites, Josh. xxiv. 14; Ez. xx. 7—it must be distinctly understood that none of the festivals of Israel, as *they are contained and ordered in the Mosaic code*, has any bearing or reference whatever to heathen ceremonies; the reason and origin of each holy day is, in all instances, clearly derived from events connected with the history of Israel, or the doctrines for the first time promulgated by Moses; so that, if even in remote antiquity the Hebrews celebrated festivals analogous in their rites, and coinciding in times, with those instituted by the Mosaic law, these festivals and rites were, by this legislation, placed on a perfectly different basis; the rites received another, original significance; the times were brought into accordance with historical events, and the whole ceremonies divested from all superstitious or idolatrous elements, spiritualised, and from arbitrary and often absurd customs elevated into symbols full of enlightening truth for the mind, and ennoblement for the heart. Even the most inveterate and radical critics will not be able to

find in the *Mosaic* law of Passover any connection with the course of the sun or other astrological elements, or in the paschal-lamb a resemblance to the ram sacrificed by the Egyptians to Jupiter Ammon, or in the marking of the door-posts an imitation of the custom of the Egyptians, "to oil at the vernal equinox, cattle, trees, and other objects, to protect them against the destroying fire of the sun, because on that day the world was once destroyed by fire" (*Lengerke*, Ken. p. 421), or in the eating of the unleavened bread the custom of agricultural eastern nations to eat unleavened barley-cakes at the festivals celebrated at the beginning of the harvest (*Wilson* on xiii. 7), as this analogy would require the command of unleavened bread at least on the feast of weeks also; or any reference whatever to heathen customs. Are those writers prepared to deny the historical fact of the exodus? or to prove the improbability of a festival based on such an event? Is there any contradiction in the internal character of the festival? or does the Biblical account betray the least uncertainty or indistinctness? Are there any cosmical or astronomical elements discernible in the rites as detailed in our chapter? and is not the historical and ethical foundation pointed out with singular clearness and force? If, therefore, indeed, there prevailed, in primeval times, among the Asiatic nations, a superstition which the Hebrews had also adopted, we are forced still more to admire the power of abstraction, and the vigour of their intellect, with which they converted a superstition into a sublime doctrine. These remarks apply equally to all Hebrew festivals and rites, traces or analogies of which might be found among other nations also. And in this sense, *Lengerke* himself (Ken. p. 456), remarks: "We must, however, confess, that the Mosaic laws, although based on, and derived from, institutions and rites of natural religion, are perfectly free from such elements, and are exclusively connected with the purest notions of monotheism. The law bore, therefore, to the people the character of an entirely new legislation, since it combated and disowned even every affinity with historical or natural ceremonies." In the Mosaic institutions, we must clearly distinguish between the external symbolical form and their internal character. It is true, the former frequently coincides with that of pagan religions; and this was natural from the course of the universal development of mankind, and from the condition of the Hebrew nation in particular. The vocation of the people of Israel did not imply a transplanting from the soil of its time into another later period; not a magical and miraculous uprooting from every connection with the world and with nature; no leap over the stages of development inherent in the nature of the human race; but a training of the people, which yet was entirely to remain a nation of its own time, and which was subject to the general laws of human progress. Perfectly different is the relation in which the *internal* character of the Mosaic rites stands to those of heathen antiquity. Paganism is natural religion, deification of nature in its whole extent; its basis is pantheism. If the idea of the unity of the Deity sometimes breaks through as a dim and vague notion, it implies no personal being with self-consciousness and self-activity, but something impersonal; it soon dissolves itself again into an infinite multiplicity of gods, the mere personifications of the various powers of nature. Above all moral government, stands the necessity of nature, the fate to which gods and men must bend—the highest moral perfection at which man can arrive is the completest resignation under the iron rule of necessity; the barren, gloomy virtue of the stoic is the culminating point of heathen ethics; a passive identification with fate or the natural events, is the ideal of a pagan sage. But the God of Israel is absolutely *one*, spiritual, perfectly and thoroughly personal; no abstract notion, but a concrete being, as evidently existing as the human soul which He has bestowed, and which is a part of His infinite essence. He is not identical with the world; He is its Framer; the universe is subjected to Him, and obeys His will; it is merely ordained to proclaim His might and His glory; it is a witness of His omnipotence, but not the *entire* emanation of His power. He has created the world, and has thereby lost no

particle of His boundless might ; He pervades the universe, and His spirit is yet one and undivided. He covers Himself with light as with a garment, and stretches out the heavens like a curtain. But even if the heavens vanish away like smoke, and the earth decays like a garment, His glory will exist through all eternity. (See Psalm civ. 2; Isaiah li. 6; comp. *Creuzer*, Symb. iv. p. 151; *Baur*, Symb. i. p. 66; *Baehr*, Symb. i. 34; ii. 640).

Mackay (in his work "Religious Development of the Hebrews") asserts, with much boldness, but very little plausibility, "that the Passover was already celebrated according to the rites of Moloch, or the atrocities of cannibalism, and that it was notoriously in relation with the sacrificial (!) infanticide of the Hebrews." It is easier to send forth such startling paradoxical opinions than to defend them; and even Wilson, the unconditional and enthusiastic admirer of Mackay, finds that this supposition is not based upon "cogent reasons."

It is further, we grieve to remark, but too well known, that some confused, and, we must add, malevolent writers, have endeavoured to spread the monstrous conjecture, that the Israelites performed human sacrifices at their Passover rites. Ghillany, in a book devoted to that subject, writes (p. 518): "At the time of the first temple they killed, for every section of the Israelites, a man, mixed his blood among the bread instead of leaven, and ate this bread, to which they attributed an expiating power; then the body of the killed was roasted,"—we shudder while we transcribe it—"and every Hebrew was obliged to eat a piece of this flesh for the atonement of his sins." Such fathomless, incredible absurdity, would naturally excite nothing but our pity and ridicule, had it not, unfortunately, led the credulous and fanatic mob, in several countries, to bloodshed, rapine, and sanguinary persecution of the innocent Israelites. A religion, which forcibly and repeatedly enjoins to abstain even from the blood of *animals*, "because it is the soul," should sanction the mixing of the sacred bread of Passover with *human* blood? A religion, which gives so many detailed and strict prescriptions concerning clean and unclean animals, should authorise the abomination of human flesh "for the atonement of sin?" A religion—but we think it unnecessary to dilate upon that monstrous aspersion, which is, indeed, thrown among an ignorant population, like a firebrand levelled by a maniac into a wooden city, but which has never been, nor *can* it be, substantiated by any argument taken either from the law or the practice of the Hebrews. May all future generations be spared the shame of witnessing a renewal of such ignominious scenes as those which excited Europe, not many years since, in consequence of those hideous calumnies, which only the magnanimity and influence of a Sir Moses Montefiore has been able to silence.

We will, however, mention, that among the many absurdities which ancient writers relate concerning Hebrew customs and rites (see *Introduction*, § 3), it is also asserted by Apion (Josephus c. Apion, ii. 8), that the Israelites annually fed in the temple, and then sacrificed, a Greek stranger; and, from the circumstances that the Hebrews celebrated the seventh day, which is the day of Chronos (Saturni dies, Saturday), and that the Egyptians offered to Osiris, the son of Chronos, human sacrifices (*Plutarch*, De Iside, § 73), the fable was spread, that the Hebrews sacrificed annually a human being! (see notes on xx. 8—11). Modern critics of the opposite schools, as Hengstenberg and Ewald, reject the opinion of those who pretend to conclude, from the trial of Abraham (Gen. xxii), and the vow of Jephthah (Judges xi), that human sacrifices were not unusual among the Hebrews; and those who still repeat this opinion, have certainly less scientific impartiality than fanatic malice. Some have even found in the character of the Pesach, a resemblance to the adoration of Moloch (see *Nork*, Bibl. Mythol. i. p. 41), an hypothesis as arbitrary as it is extravagant. The Biblical records must, indeed, be read with a singular bias, if such senseless conjectures, devoid of every basis, or even appearance of probability, are the deplorable result of those researches.

The further and more detailed explanation of the rites and precepts connected with Passover, will be found in the notes on the verses in which they are first mentioned.

The internal structure and unity of perhaps no part of Exodus have been more questioned than those of the twelfth chapter. But, without enumerating the various objections raised, we give here the obvious and clear connection of the different verses: 1st. ver. 1—13, the commands of God concerning the first Passover in Egypt; 2nd. ver. 14—20, regarding its future celebration; 3rd. ver. 21—27, Moses communicates to the Israelites the import of those commands; 4th. ver. 28, the Israelites make the necessary preparations for the paschal-lamb, and the other ceremonies to be observed in the evening of the fourteenth day of Nisan; 5th. ver. 29—39, the history of the tenth plague, and of the Exodus of the Israelites; 6th. vers. 40, 41, historical notice respecting the duration of the Israelites' sojourn in Egypt; 7th. ver. 42, the sacred character of the night of the Exodus, for all future times, is emphatically enjoined; 8th. ver. 43—49, precepts with regard to the persons to be admitted to the paschal-lamb; 9th. ver. 50, the remark that the Israelites followed these precepts, to which, in ver. 51, as an appropriate conclusion, the principal event related in the chapter is briefly repeated. Thus the whole chapter is in perfect harmony with its parts; it is evidently written after the event; and the inspired author had, therefore, already a sufficiently clear conception of the character of Passover to enable him logically to combine the precepts concerning its present and future celebration.

AND the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying: 2. This month *shall be* to you the beginning of months; it *shall be* the first

2. *This month* (Abib or Nisan) *shall be to you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.* The translation of the Septuagint (which has been adopted by Houbigant and others): “this month is to you the first of the year,” would render this verse strangely superfluous, as no twofold emphatical assertion would be required to state a fact supposed to have been known to every Israelite. It is, thus, evident from the tenor of our verse, that previous to the institution of Passover a different chronology, with regard to the months, was in use among the Hebrews, and, although we have no direct statements in the Bible, it is easy to conjecture, if we compare Exod. xxiii. 16, with Josephus, Antiq. I. iii. 3, that the seventh month (later called Tishri), in which the harvest was perfectly completed, was considered as the beginning of the year. For we read, in Exod. xxiii. 16: “the festival of in-gathering, or of Tabernacles, is to be celebrated at the end of the year,” and although that fes-

tival was fixed upon the fifteenth of Tishri, apparently the *beginning* of the year, this date might yet, as a general term, be understood as the end of the old year, as the new circle of agricultural labours for the following harvest commenced only *after* that festival; and Josephus (*loc. cit.*) observes: “Moses appointed that *Nisan*, which is the same with Xanthicus, should be the first month for their festivals, because he brought them out of Egypt in that month; so that ~~this~~ month began the year as to all the solemnities they observed to the honour of God, although he preserved the original order of the months [from Tishri], as to selling and buying, and other worldly affairs.” It is natural, that an agricultural people like the Hebrews, considered their *civil* year concluded with the termination of the harvest, which entirely finished the compass of their annual labours, and after which commenced a new cycle, or year, characterised by the same occupations, the same hopes, and the same anxieties. But, in order to keep

month of the year to you. 3. Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, On the tenth *day* of this month

alive in the midst of the people the memory of the miraculous redemption from Egypt, this event was to be considered as the beginning of a new epoch; so that, 1st. not only the *years* were counted from it (see Exod. xvi. 1; xix. 1; xl. 1; Numb. i. 1; ix. 1; x. 11; xxxiii. 38; Deut. v. 1; 1 Kings vi. 1, etc.), but, 2nd. also the *months*, simply as the second, third, fourth month, etc. But neither of the two chronologies have been long or exclusively observed; the *years* were, later, inaccurately described after the reign of the kings, or the abduction of the Israelites into the exile (Ezek. xxxiii. 21; xl. 1), and the *months* received, after the Babylonian captivity, foreign, probably Chaldee, names (Nisan, Iar, Sivan, etc., already used in the later books of the Old Testament, Ezra, Esther, Nehemiah), which stand in no connection with the historical reminiscences of Israel. The names "month of ears" (xiii. 4), for the first month of the year; "the month of splendour, or of flowers" (1 Kings vi. 1, 37), for the second month; "the month of perennial streams" (1 Kings viii. 2), for the seventh month, and "the month of rain," (1 Kings vi. 38), for the eighth month—these appear to be more appellative than proper names. Thus, the Hebrew calendar has a double New-year, one on the first day of Tishri for *political* and *civil* transactions, the more convenient for the later times, because the Seleucidic era commenced likewise in October (B. C. 312); and the other on the first day of Nisan, for the regulation of the *religious* festivals; *although the positive injunction of our verse, and the usual mode of counting the months throughout the Bible, lead us to suppose, that for many centuries after Moses, Nisan was alone considered the legal beginning of the year, and that, only with the adoption of the Chaldean calendar, Tishri was counted as the opening month of the year.* This seems to have taken place a considerable time after the introduction of the Seleucidic

era, and we meet with it in no earlier Hebrew work than the Second Book of the Maccabees, or not before B. C. 130. Now, it is known, that the Hebrews reckoned by lunar months, which is, indeed, the simplest and most obvious calculation for a people little advanced in astronomy, the regular return of the new moon offering a natural measure of time. As, however, the principal Hebrew festivals had a close connection with the produce of agriculture, that is, with the influence of the *sun*, as, for instance, on Passover the first ripe ears of corn were offered in the temple, and on Pentecost the harvest was considered completed, and as the lunar year has only 354 days, 8 hours (48 min., 38 sec.), and, therefore, differs from the solar year (which has 365 days, 5 hours, 48 min., 45 sec.), annually by nearly 11 days; it was necessary, in order to prevent interruptions in the festivals, to make, from time to time, such intercalations as to make both years agree as nearly as possible. How this was effected, in the times before the exile, it is impossible now to conjecture; the present Jewish calendar has, in the year 357 A. C., been regulated by Rabbi Hillel, the younger, after a cycle of nineteen years (Metonic cycle), each of which contains seven embolismic or leap years, namely, the third, sixth, eighth, eleventh, fourteenth, seventeenth and nineteenth year, when one month is added after the last month, Adar. For the chief consideration in arranging the Hebrew calendar must always have been the state of the crops in February or March. If they were then sufficiently advanced to warrant a hope that they would, one month later, yield ripe firstlings-ears for the offering of Passover, no alteration was adopted with regard to the calendar. But if the grains were in a backward state so as to justify no such expectation, the intercalation of a certain number of days was necessary, to allow the corn to ripen; and this matter was, later, systematically

they shall take for themselves *every* man a lamb ¹for a fathers' house, a lamb for a house. 4. And if the *household* be too little for a lamb, let him and his neighbour next to

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—According to the house of their fathers.

fixed by the Metonic cycle. The months contain, alternately, thirty and twenty-nine days. Thus the assertion of Maimonides is perfectly correct: "the months of the year are lunar months, but the years which we compute, are solar years;" and the Jewish calendar is, therefore, a strange and complicated mixture of the lunar and solar systems (similar to the chronology of the Chinese, and the Indians). It is, however, so well regulated, that even a Scaliger admits "that there is nothing more exact, nothing more perfect, than the calculation of the Jewish year." Less acceptable is Maimonides' opinion, that in our verse lunar months are introduced, whereas, before that time, other divisions of the year were in use; for, in this verse, *the order* of the months only, not their duration or character is altered. These remarks will suffice for the understanding of our passage; for further conjectures about this difficult and disputed subject (certain facts and results there are little more than those here condensed) we refer to the works mentioned in the larger edition.

The time of the first month (Nisan) is thus described by Josephus (*Antiq.* III. x. 5). "The month of Xanthicus which is the beginning of our year, when the sun is in Aries;" and he calls it elsewhere (*Antiq.* II. xiv. 6), corresponding with the Egyptian month Pharmuthi, which was then, according to Ideler (*Chron.* i. 143), from the 27th of March to the 25th of April of the Julian Calendar.

3. *Speak to all the congregation of Israel*, in which introductory words already the national unity of the people of Israel is alluded to; every independent individual is included in this command. The paschal-lamb was already to be chosen on the tenth day of Nisan, according to the

context only for that one Passover in Egypt, not for the future celebration of the festival, although some commentators suppose, that this precept applies also to the later time. The lamb was to be *chosen*, that it might assume in the eyes of the Israelites a peculiar character; a character of significance and holiness. That it was to be chosen on the *tenth* day of the month, whilst the commencement of the festival was fixed for the evening belonging to the *fifteenth*, seems also to be characteristic. We find, indeed, a similar correspondence between the tenth and fifteenth day in the festivals of the seventh month (Tishri); and there are traces of the particular distinction, attached to the number ten in the Pentateuch, as the ten generations from Adam to Noah, and as many from Noah to Abraham, ten plagues in Egypt, ten commandments, etc. There are even signs, however faint, of the existence, in primeval times, of a week consisting of ten days. In *Gen.* xxiv. 55, Laban says: "Let the virgin remain with us *some days, or ten*," which seems to signify, a few days, or a week of ten days. In some parts of Asia there is still in use a small week of five days, to which a larger week of ten days would correspond. "For," observes Ewald (*Antiq.*, p. 105), "the lunar month was either divided into four parts, and thus a week of seven days was formed; or it was divided into three sections, each of which was a week of ten days; and thus the numbers seven and ten gradually assumed a sacred character" (compare note on xxiii. 10—12). But although it is not impossible that the Hebrews had, in common with other Asiatic nations, in times beyond the researches of history, a week consisting of ten days; the Pentateuch knows from its very first chapter only the hebdomadal week.—Tradition observes, that

his house take one according to the number of the souls; you shall count for the lamb *every* man according to his eating. 5. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male, one year old; you shall take *it* from the sheep or from the

the four days between the tenth and fourteenth of Nisan were necessary to examine, whether the lamb was faultless, or to impress the merciful deliverance of the Israelites still deeper upon their minds by leaving the lamb, the symbol of that redemption, for a longer time before their eyes; or to give time for the circumcision, which had been neglected in Egypt by many Israelites (see vers. 44, 48). We believe that a certain scope was necessary for a whole enthralled nation to procure a lamb of such a peculiar description, and especially for the poorer members of the community, whom their more favoured brethren were bound to provide with it.

4. *And if the household be too little for a lamb*; thus also Luther, and Mendelssohn; more distinctly still translate the Septuagint and Vulgate. And this sense is rendered by almost all other translators. But Jonathan, in his paraphrastical manner, introduces a traditional element, rendering: "if, however, the men of the house are less than ten," in accordance with the rabbinical axiom, that solemn actions, especially prayers, are to be performed by an assembly of at least ten Israelites, because the presence of God prefers to dwell among such assembly, since that number represents the whole community of Israel. And so we have here again the notion of the *unity* symbolised by the rites of Passover, which is still more evident from the following passage of Josephus (Bell. Jud. VI. ix. 3): "they slay the paschal-lamb from the ninth hour to the eleventh, but so that a company of not less than ten belong to every sacrifice (for it is not lawful for them to feast singly by themselves), and many of us are twenty in a company." But although such assembly was considered desirable, it was not indispensable; and Targum

Jonathan remarks on our verse, "the number of the members of the family may be less than ten; if it is only sufficient to consume the lamb."—The female part of the community was also admitted to the paschal-lamb, but according to rabbinical regulation, the *obligation* to do so devolved on the men alone (See *supra*, p. 138). But the Karaites permitted only adult male persons to participate of it.—According to Joma xii. 1, foreign Israelites, who came to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, were accommodated with the necessary apartments gratuitously, but were obliged to leave to their hosts the skin of the paschal-lamb, and the vessels they had used in their religious ceremonies. However, as the circumference of Jerusalem was little more than one league, and as the number of the Israelitish visitors on Passover was exceedingly great (at the Passover of 65, A. C., there were in Jerusalem three millions of Jews): it was impossible to lodge them all in houses; and it is probable that most of the pious guests lived during their stay in tents around the town, as to this time the Mohammedan pilgrims around Mecca (compare notes on xxiii. 14—17.—*You shall count for the lamb every man according to his eating*, that is, you shall, in selecting the guests and fixing their numbers, be guided by the usual measure or amount of their eating, so that the lamb may be likely to suffice for them.—According to the rabbinical interpretation every Israelite was to eat of the paschal-lamb a piece at least as large as an olive; those who were unable to eat that quantity, as children and aged persons, were not counted among the number of guests.

5. The paschal-lamb was to be: 1. *perfect*, faultless, without blemish in accordance with the general precept concerning sacrifices in Levit. xxii. 20: "Whatsoever

goats: 6. And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it ¹at dusk. 7. And they

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—In the evening.

hath a blemish, that you shall not offer; for it shall not be acceptable for you;" 2. *male* in harmony with the general notion of antiquity, that the males are superior to females; and, therefore, more appropriate for offerings to the Most High (see Lev. xxii. 19), and 3. *one year old* that is, a lamb, which is within the first year from its birth, and has not yet attained its second year. This tender age, the type of innocence, made it peculiarly adapted for a sacrifice of the covenant to be concluded between God and Israel as a nation or a political community.—*You shall take it from the sheep or from the goats*; either from the one or from the other. I think, says Bochart, that the pious used this liberty (of offering either a lamb or a kid) so that they chose the lamb with predilection, as the sacrifice more acceptable to God, because its gentleness, docility, and innocence is greater. And this is also the reason why the lamb was, even by heathen nations, considered as the most sacred sacrifice. Compare *supra*, p. 137.

6. The literal meaning of the Hebrew words which we have translated: "at dusk," is: *between the two evenings*. The principal opinions, which have been proposed about this obscure phrase are: 1. Onkelos renders: "between the two suns," which Talmudical expression signifies the space of time between the setting of the sun and the moment when the stars become visible (between six and seven o'clock), an interval sufficient for an ordinary walker to go half a league. The same opinion has been more distinctly expressed by Ebn Ezra: "We have two evenings; the first, the setting of the sun, that is, the time when he disappears beneath the horizon; and the second, the ceasing of the light which is reflected in the clouds; and between both lies an interval of about one hour

and twenty minutes;" and this explanation, which appears to be the most rational interpretation is also that of the Karaites and the Samaritans, and has been adopted by many others. The Arabians have the same idiom in the same sense: "the time between the two evenings," i.e. between the beginning of darkness and the perfect setting of the sun. The Septuagint and Vulgate render: "towards the evening;" which translation, although not clear, does not exclude the same interpretation. 2. Saadiah, who questions the possibility that the whole congregation of Israel could, within the short space of one hour and twenty minutes, sprinkle the blood on the altar of the temple, observes: "It was a tradition, that the people began to kill the lamb from the moment when it was evident that the sun declined towards the west; and our text mentions the time 'between the two evenings,' because the greater part of the paschal-lambs were then killed; and the disappearance of the light of the sun was the last point for the performance of that rite." This is also the opinion of Rashi, who remarks: "from noon and upwards is called *between the two evenings*, which expression embraces, therefore, the hours from the commencement of the lengthening shadows to the beginning of the night." But we must urge against this explanation: *a*) the words, "between the two evenings," which have no etymological or internal connection with "the time after noon;" and *b*) the passage Deut. xvi. 6, where it is commanded to kill the paschal-lamb: "in the evening, when the sun goes down, the time when thou didst depart from Egypt" (compare vers. 31 and 42 of our chapter), evidently with reference to, and in harmony with, our verse. 3. The traditional acceptance, adopted by the Pharisees and the

shall take of the blood, and strike *it* on the two side-posts and on the lintel of the houses wherein they will eat it. 8. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; with bitter *herbs* they shall

Talmudists (Pesach, 61 *a*) and acted upon in the service of the temple was, that the "first evening" is the time in the afternoon, when the heat of the sun begins to decrease about three o'clock; and that the "second evening" commences with sunset. Thus writes Josephus (Bell. Jud. VI. ix. 3): "The passover festival took place, for which they sacrifice from the ninth to the eleventh hour," i. e. between three and five P.M. It is, however, not impossible, that although those words mean, originally, the time at dusk, as described by Ebn Ezra, it was later, at the actual service of the temple, found impracticable to perform the increasing number of sacrifices in such limited space of time, and that it was, therefore, gradually extended from an earlier hour in the afternoon; but no doubt the later part was preferred, as more in accordance with the literal injunction of the law, as is evident from the remark of Saadiah above quoted. The translation of the English Version *in the evening*, is too indistinct. Hitzig's opinion, that "the two evenings" are the hours before and after sunset, and "between the two evenings," therefore, the precise moment of sunset, since the fourteenth of Nisan was likewise a Sabbath, on which it was unlawful to make the preparations even for the paschal-lamb, can scarcely be seriously entertained; as that expression recurs on many other occasions, undoubtedly in no connection with the Sabbath (Num. xxviii. 4; Exod. xxx. 8, etc.), and the one minute which separates both days was certainly insufficient for the preparation and killing of the paschal-lamb; and admitted even, that the fourteenth of Nisan was, in the year of the exodus, a Sabbath, it was not so in all the subsequent years.—We call particular attention to the fact, that every Israelite, not the priests and Levites alone, were allowed to kill the paschal-lamb, as

if thus manifestly to show, for the first time, that they were all equally sacred before their God, although later the Levites took a prominent part in these solemn sacrifices; see 2 Chron. xxx. 7, xxxv. 5, etc.

7. *And they shall take of the blood*, etc. Passover was the festival of initiation; the paschal-lamb the initiatory sacrifice; the blood is the soul, the life of the animal; the house is the representative of the family; the door-posts are the most prominent part of the house; they are that which leads into the house. Thus the deep significance of the extraordinary command here enjoined is obvious. The blood of the national sacrifice was visibly marked on the abodes of the Israelites; it atoned for the families who lived therein; it made them worthy to enter the sacred covenant; it was thus at the same time a pledge of help and life. Thus this ceremony served for the following purposes: *a*) It was after the departure of the Israelites, a proof to the Egyptians that the Lord had, in the midst of their own universal pestilence, protected and delivered His people. *b*) It was a symbolical sign, in accordance with the general figurative phraseology, which is used in connection with this plague; ver. 12: "For I will pass through the land of Egypt;" and ver. 13: "and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you;" and analogous to the redeeming sign which Ezekiel (ix. 4) mentions in the description of a vision concerning a similar calamity. Hence appears the impropriety of the conjecture, that that command was given to the Israelites in order to show to the Egyptians publicly, that they dared freely to kill their sacred, inviolable animals. The rites connected with Passover are too holy, too significant, to be used merely in opposition to the absurdest forms of idolatry; they have

eat it. 9. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden with water, but roast *with* fire; its head with its legs, and with the

all a comprehensive, and deep, positive value; they do not require the adventitious support of negative relations.

8, 9. The paschal-lamb was to be eaten in that night, 1. roasted with fire; and 2. roasted *entirely*, with its head, its legs, and its purtenance; but neither raw, nor sodden with water.

1. The principal reason why the lamb was not to be cooked but roasted, was the precipitancy with which the Israelites left Egypt, and which did not allow them leisure for a more careful preparation of the meal. A variety of other, mostly artificial reasons (for instance, that eating roasted meat is the custom of free and illustrious men; that roasting with fire produces *uniformity* in the arrangements; that it excluded certain pagan rites; that it is the cleanest mode of preparing meat, etc.), has been collected by Spencer. More plausible appears the explanation of Baehr (Symb. ii. p. 636), that the mere roasting of the lamb by the fire shows the Hebrews as leaving their settled abodes, as entering upon the struggle and combat of their wanderings as "the army of God," for it was especially the custom of soldiers to eat meat hastily roasted by the fire. But he urges the words "in all the *armies* of the Lord" too much; *armies* is here, as frequently, the *hosts*, the *numbers*, comprising the whole people. If boiling the meat causes "not much more delay" than roasting, it occasions certainly *some* delay; and it was all-important that the people should, at a moment's notice, be ready to commence their journey. According to Rashi, the entrails were first taken out, cleaned, and then put again into their original place (see, however, *infra*, the extract from Belon). The prohibition, that the meat should not be eaten *raw*, was not superfluous, because even at present eastern travellers (as Burchhardt) have found persons eating the raw flesh of killed animals, without any preparation or dressing. Targum Onkelos and Jonathan render: "while

still living;" and here we may observe, that, according to Herodotus and Plutarch, several heathen nations, at their barbarous and idolatrous sacrifices in honour of Bacchus, which have their origin in Egypt, used to tear off parts from the living animals, and to consume the raw and palpitating limbs. But we need not to suppose the Israelites to have inclined to this savage custom.—The lamb was, further, not to be cooked in water, because this would make the dismemberment of the animal indispensable.

2. We have already above alluded to the probable reason why the lamb was to be roasted entirely with all its members and parts, none of which was to be broken (vers. 4, 6); this rite served to represent the perfect unity of Israel as a nation, and thus to symbolise their political existence now to be established by their exit from Egypt, and sealed by that sacrifice of covenant between God and the people. All who partook of that undivided sacrifice should consider themselves as an undivided community. Those who were assembled for the paschal meal, whether they belonged to the same or to different families, represented, in a smaller compass, the whole people; and that assembly again, by seeing the whole lamb before them undissected and intact, was naturally and forcibly reminded of its unity with their absent brethren, and of the national significance of the whole festival.—Some illustration of several precepts connected with the paschal-lamb might also be furnished by the following observation of Layard (Discoveries, p. 287): "A sheep was always slain for the guests; . . . if there were not strangers enough to consume the whole, the rest was given to the workmen or to the needy, as it is considered derogatory to the character of a truly hospitable and generous man to keep meat until the following day . . . Even the poorest Bedouin who kills a sheep invites all his

purtenance thereof. 10. And you shall not leave anything of it until the morning; and that which is left of it

friends and neighbours to the repast, and if there be still any remnants, distributes them amongst the poor and the hungry, although he should himself want on the morrow." It might, in our countries, appear a difficult task, to bring a whole lamb well roasted on the table. But, in the Orient it is not unfrequent to roast entire lambs and sheep. Belon narrates (b. i. c. 60): "At the end of the bridge we met with shepherds, roasting entire sheep, to sell them to travellers; the entrails had been taken out and the body again sown together. Those who have not seen it can scarcely imagine how commodiously such a mass of flesh can be roasted." About other methods of roasting sheep, customary in the East, see Thevenot, Trav. ii. p. 236.

This roasted paschal-lamb is to be eaten with *unleavened bread* and *bitter herbs*. The former had a double symbolical meaning: 1. It was ordered in commemoration of the sufferings under which the Israelites sighed in Egypt; and is, therefore, called "bread of affliction," Deut. xvi. 3; and no more appropriate emblem of that long misery could be selected than that, "poor, unpalatable bread," consisting only of flour and water. Thus the use of unleavened bread was to remind the Israelites of their *past* oppression; it was to keep alive a grateful remembrance of the miraculous redemption from the tyrannical yoke which they had borne for centuries. But it represents purity and sanctity; it points forward to the *future* glory of Israel, to its vocation as a nation of priests, as a community of sanctity and religious life. It is thus intended to fill their minds with a deep feeling of the sublime mission for which the Eternal had graciously destined them; it is the spiritual bread, which *is* life and *spreads* life. Unleavened bread was later used at the public meat-offerings (Exod. xxix. 2; Lev. ii. 4, 5, 11, etc.); for leaven was prepared by letting

dough, mixed with water, lie for some days, till it fermented; and is, therefore, considered as a kind of corrupted substance, incompatible with the sanctity of sacrifices. "Leaven," says Plutarch, "comes from corruption and corrupts the dough with which it is mixed, and every fermentation seems to be a putrefaction." And Gellius observes: "To touch flour mixed with leaven was not allowed to the priest of Jupiter" (Noct. Att. x. 13, 19). Every leaven was to be removed from the houses; the Israelites were to separate themselves from sin, and impurity, and corruption; for only with purified minds and divine thoughts they could become the teachers of nations; and this was the great end which Providence pursued in releasing them from their ignominious bondage (see on ver. 13, and p. 135; compare Deut. xiv. 2; vii. 6—8). It is well known that, in accordance with these notions, the Rabbins frequently compared the good instinct of man with unleavened bread, whilst they metaphorically compared the evil propensity with leaven.—The law does not fix the species of corn from which the Passover-bread was to be baked; tradition, however, supplying this deficiency, permits the flour of wheat, barley, spelt, and oats (Pesach, ii. 5). Some suppose that they were first baked from barley, as that grain which men used in the very earliest time for their food. "Among the Bedouins and Kabyles, as soon as the dough is kneaded it is made into thin cakes, either to be baked immediately upon the coals, or else in a shallow earthen vessel like a frying-pan, called *Tajen*" (Paxton, Illustr. of Script. i. p. 369; compare note on ver. 39).

Bitter herbs symbolising the bitterness of bondage, with which the Israelites were tormented, are rendered by the Septuagint with wild lettuce or endive, which is, according to Niebuhr, still used by the Jews in Egypt and Arabia on the first evenings of Passover.

until the morning you shall burn with fire. 11. And thus shall you eat it: *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your stick in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste: it is a ¹Pesach to the Lord. 12. For I shall pass through the land of Egypt this night, and shall smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Passover.

—According to a remark in Ebn Ezra's commentary, it was very general in Egypt to eat bitter herbs to all meals, even to bread alone, for the purpose of digestion, which in that country suffers much on account of the heaviness and dampness of the air. But even if such custom really prevailed, and if, therefore, the use of bitter herbs was superfluously enjoined, that external custom received, under the circumstances of our context, a new typical meaning and a higher signification; for the whole festival of Passover symbolises the perfect and eternal separation between Israel and Egypt (xiv. 13); and in a cycle of ordinances so specifically spiritual, we shall scarcely expect to find any dietary prescription.

10. Macrobius (Saturn. ii. 2) relates that the heathens, previously to their undertaking a journey, were accustomed to offer a sacrifice, which was called *propter viam* (because it was intended to secure a prosperous journey), and to eat the *whole* of it, if possible; but if any part was left, to burn it with fire. Herodotus (i. 132) narrates, that the Persians used to look upon the remnants of their sacrifices with superstitious veneration, and in order to prevent a similar abuse, to which the Israelites, in their idolatrous disposition, might then have inclined, the precept of burning the unconsumed parts of the paschal-lamb was, according to Rosenmüller and others, enjoined. That command might, however, have originated in exactly the reverse motive, namely to preclude portions of the sacred meal being afterwards thrown disrespectfully away, contrary to its solemn destination; an apprehension, which was

especially well-founded at the hasty celebration of the first Passover in Egypt, and which might also have suggested the command, not to take any part of the paschal-lamb out of the house; but to consume it there with religious devotion (ver. 46). Annihilating by fire was by all antiquity considered as the purest and most purifying process.—As the probable number of persons sufficient to consume a lamb, was fixed beforehand (ver. 4), Ebn Ezra explains the possibility of a remnant by supposing the case, that the company included an invalid, who cannot eat his portion; and Targum Jonathan expresses the rabbinical interpretation of the words: "and that which is left of it till the morning, you shall burn with fire," rendering: "and that which remains over of it you shall keep till the morning, and burn on the *sixteenth* day of Nisan; for it is not right to burn the rest of a holy sacrifice on a festive and sacred day."

11. The paschal-lamb was to be consumed by the Israelites completely prepared for their departure; namely: 1. *Their loins girded*; for as the Orientals wear long and loose robes, they fastened them on their journeys round their waist, with a strong girdle, generally of leather (compare 2 Kings iv. 29; ix. 1. Jeremiah i. 17, etc.). 2. *Their shoes on their feet*; for they wore shoes or sandals on their travels (Josh. ix. 5, 13), but not in their houses. See our note on iii. 5. 3. *Their sticks in their hands*; for sticks are not only useful but necessary for travellers in the sandy desert; and 4. *in haste*, like wanderers, and in order to be able to commence their journey immediately after having *finished* the meal, which was to be

beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I shall execute judgment: I the Eternal. 13. And the blood shall be to you for a sign upon the houses where you *are*: and when I see the blood, I shall pass over you, and the plague will not be upon you as a ²destruction, when I smite the land of Egypt. 14. And this day shall be to you as a

² *Engl. Vers.*—To destroy you.

considered as a sign of the new sacred covenant between God and Israel. The haste was to increase the solemnity of the act, excluding, as it did, every luxurious effeminacy. Targum Jonathan renders the beginning of our verse: "and with these rites you shall consume the lamb this time, but not in future generations," which is self-evident; and Ebn Ezra says pointedly against those, who yet recommended the observance of the same ceremonies in later times: "they are all wandering in their minds! let them also annually on the fifteenth of Nisan go out of their land in commemoration of the exodus from Egypt."

12. The power of God will fearfully manifest itself in the land; His majesty will create terror; His justice will produce awe and veneration—and *thus* He will pass through the land.—*And against all the gods of Egypt I shall execute judgment*: which words evidently mean, that the uniform and general extirpation of all the first-born of the Egyptians, which calamity their gods will be powerless to avert, will be a manifest proof to those, who have hitherto worshipped them, that they are a vain support and an idle refuge: thus the authority of the idols will be destroyed in the eyes of the Egyptians, and this was the severest "judgment," which the omnipotent Lord of the Universe could exercise against them. The rabbinical interpretation of that phrase has again been expressed by Targum Jonathan: "Against all the idols of Egypt I shall execute four judgments: the idols made of metals shall melt, those of stone shall be overthrown, those of clay shall be smashed, and those of wood shall crumble into dust, that the Egyptians

may know, that I am the Lord."—Similarly explains Ebn Ezra: "All the gods of Egypt will be smitten by the same fate which befell *Dagon*, the idol of the Philistines, whose head was broken off and fell down, when the ark of the Israelites was brought into his temple" (see 1 Sam. v. 3, 4). Others, as J. D. Michaelis, take our verse still more literally: "That many of the firstborn animals, which would also die, were among the Egyptian deities" (see note to viii. 22); but the emphatical expression: "that *all* the gods of the Egyptians would experience the might of the Lord," does not allow us to limit that punishment to the animal deities alone. The translation of those who render: "the mighty of Egypt," seems quite improbable.

14. After the precepts concerning the Passover in Egypt had been communicated to Moses, till ver. 13, the observances for its future celebration are now enjoined to him from ver. 14 to 20 (see p. 142), Philippson remarks: "Albu (Ik-karim, iii. 16) dilates largely upon the term: "an ordinance for ever," and he is of opinion, that "for ever" is also applied to a limited time, and does not necessarily signify eternity. So in Prov. xxii. 28; Isa. xlv. 17; Exod. xxi. 6 (where a service till the jubilee is called an eternal one), [but this passage is of disputed meaning, see our note on it]; xxvii. 21; Levit. xxiv. 3." It is, however, evident, that a similar restriction is not contained in the precept of our verse, and that it was certainly the intention of the legislator to enjoin the celebration of Passover for all futurity. Such alterations in its rites as became necessary, in consequence of the destruction of the temple

memorial; and you shall celebrate it *as* a feast to the Lord through your generations; you shall celebrate it *as* an ordinance for ever. 15. Seven days shall you eat unleavened bread; even the first day you shall remove the leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth 'anything leavened from the first day to the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. 16. And on the first day *there shall be* a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation to you; no work shall be done on them, save *that* which is to be eaten by every man, that only may be done by you. 17. And you shall observe *the feast of* unleavened bread; for on this selfsame

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Leavened bread.

(see p. 137), are no deviation from the precepts, but their observance, according to their *spirit*; and it is these modifications only, in which the festival, as at present observed, differs from the commands contained in our chapter.

15. *Seven days shall you eat unleavened bread.* This command can, as Ebn Ezra remarks, only refer to the future Passovers, as the first time, at the departure from Egypt, they were only, by the pressing events, precluded from letting the dough ferment, as appears from ver. 39, see *supra*, p. 138. In commemoration of this circumstance, however, the use of unleavened bread during seven days was ordered; and this precept is already here inserted, although it had its origin in, and was given after, a later event. The contradiction between our passage, and Deut. xvi. 8: "Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day *shall be* a holy (concluding) assembly to the Lord thy God," is only in appearance, as the seventh day shall, besides the eating of unleavened bread, which it has in common with the whole festival, be distinguished by a final convocation.—*Even the first day you shall remove leaven out of your houses.* As, according to xxiii. 18, the paschal-lamb was not to be offered when leavened bread was still in the houses and as it was to be killed towards the evening

of the fourteenth day of Nisan (ver. 6): the Rabbins have ordered the removal of the leaven on this day, and they render here: "on the first day *you shall have removed* the leaven," similar to Gen. ii. 2: "on the seventh day *God had completed* His work." If, indeed, during an interval of full seven days unleavened bread was interdicted, it is natural, that, as a measure of precaution, all leaven was to be removed before the first day, that is on the fourteenth day of Nisan.—But he who eats leavened bread during these seven days, *that soul shall be cut off from Israel*, that is, those who neglect the precepts connected with this covenant between God and Israel, cease, thereby, to be members of that privileged community (ver. 19), exactly as the *personal* relation between God and those who neglect the circumcision is severed by such disregard, see p. 135.

16. On the first day on which the exodus took place, there shall be a *holy convocation*, and so also on the seventh day, in commemoration of the passage through the Red Sea, and the destruction of the Egyptian army. In the East, and chiefly among the Mohammedans, the festivals and popular assemblies are still announced by heralds, from conspicuous places, especially the towers of the temples.

17. *And you shall observe the feast*

day have I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall you observe this day throughout your generations *as* an ordinance for ever. 18. In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month, in the evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the one-and-twentieth day of the month in the evening. 19. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses; for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. 20. You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations you shall eat unleavened bread.

21. Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and

of unleavened bread, that is, you shall take care to eat, on that day, unleavened bread, as a commemoration. Ebn Ezra, Rashi and others, interpret these words literally: "you shall watch the unleavened cakes lest they ferment;" which idea would stand in no connection with the reason immediately following: "for on this day have I brought you out of Egypt."

19. Those who eat anything leavened during those seven days, shall be cut off, *both the stranger and the native of the land*. The Hebrew law distinguishes two kinds of strangers: 1. *The proselytes of justice* who have, by the rites of circumcision, been received in the covenant of Abraham, and who have, therefore, in every respect, the same duties and the same rights as born Israelites; and 2. *The strangers of the gate*, who, without having undergone that first ceremony of the Abrahamic covenant, have pledged themselves to keep aloof from idolatry, and to observe the so-called seven laws of Noah (enumerated on xxii. 20); they were only tolerated members of the state, without enjoying any religious privilege. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the perfect parity established in our verse (and in verse 49) between the native Israelite and the stranger, applies only to the first class, the proselytes of justice; although

the other strangers also, who lived in the Hebrew cities, were bound, as a precautionary measure, to abstain from leavened food during the seven days of Passover. *Natives of the land* are those who are born from Israelitish parents, although these might themselves have been proselytes, natives of another country or belonging to another nation and a different creed. Not quite correct is therefore the opinion of Clericus, who believes that the *natives of the land* were the direct descendants of Abraham, "because they are the progeny of Isaac and Jacob who were born in Canaan, which land they had received by God as their perpetual abode." The strangers of the gate cannot be strictly included in this command, as the expression: "that their soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel"—to which they do not belong—cannot be applied to them.—About the further relation between *stranger* and *foreigner*, see note on xxii. 20.

20. *In all your habitations*, that is, according to tradition, even out of Palestine, where the paschal-lamb is not offered.

21. Moses communicates now (ver. 21—28) to the elders, and through them to the people of Israel (see note to iii. 16), the law concerning the paschal-lamb; but our text contains rather the general sense than the exact words, which Moses

said to them, Draw out and take for yourselves a lamb according to your families, and kill the ¹Pesach. 22. And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the basin; and none of you shall go out from the door of his house until the morning. 23. For the Lord will pass through to smite Egypt; and when He seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side-posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destruction to come into your houses to smite *you*. 24. And you

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Passover.

used on this occasion, in order to avoid a monotonous repetition. Therefore *lamb* is here briefly said instead of *sheep* or *goat* (ver. 5); the paschal-lamb, is merely mentioned, whilst the explanation, by which alone that expression becomes intelligible, follows later in ver. 23; and the use of the hyssop in the evening of the fourteenth day of Nisan for the purpose of marking the door-posts is here for the first time ordered, whilst it is not mentioned in the preceding part of our chapter. The time, when the lamb is to be chosen, the number of guests, the manner in which the lamb is to be eaten, and the precept concerning that which might be left over to the following morning—all this is here omitted from the reason assigned.

22. *And you shall take a bunch of hyssop.* Hyssop was almost by all ancient nations considered to possess a purifying power, and was therefore frequently used for the holy ceremonies. Bunches were also extensively applied for lustrations and sprinklings; the Greeks used for these purposes one formed of the boughs of the olive-tree or laurel, called *thallos*.—But the exact species of *hyssop* is uncertain. Saadiah translates it by *SAHTAR*; and the Talmud asserts distinctly, that the Hebrews did not coincide with the Greeks in fixing the species expressed by *hyssop*. Now the *hyssop* is in 1 Kings v. 13, described as “coming forth from, or growing on, the wall,” in opposition to the lofty cedar of the Lebanon. This would well agree with the *hyssopus officinalis*,

which has small pointed leaves, about one inch long and rather hard; ramifying stalks, about one inch and a half high; and blue or white blossoms, which appear from June to August, and furnish the bees with ample honey-stuff. For sprinklings, for which it is ordered here, and for other holy ceremonies, it is well adapted; for it has small, numerous, tender, and slightly villous leaves, which when dipped in water or blood, easily imbibe the fluid, and when softly shaken give it forth again. It grows almost in natural bunches, for a single root produces a great number of suckers. But the plant *Sahtar*, which Saadiah, Maimonides, and others who follow the Jewish tradition, mention as *hyssop*, belongs to the species of *Origanum*, which is very usual in Palestine and near Mount Sinai, an aromatic plant, with a strong straight stalk, one foot high, many villous leaves and white blossoms; and it grows on stony soil, dust-hills, and similar places.—As *Origanum* resembles the *hyssop* very much (*Plin.* xx. 6, 7), the discrepancy between Jewish tradition and the old translators is easily accountable; but as in ritual matters tradition is the safest authority, we are inclined to understand *hyssop* rather as a species of *Origanum* than as *Hyssopus officinalis*, although the former might have included the latter also. The monks of Mount Sinai identify the plant *Dshahdah* with *Hyssop*.—*And you shall dip it (the hyssop) in the blood that is in the basin;* others translate: “that is on the threshold.”

shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy children for ever. 25. And it shall come to pass, when you are come to the land which the Lord will give you, as He hath spoken, that you shall keep this service. 26. And it will come to pass, when your children will say to you, What do you *mean by* this service? 27. That you shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Pesach, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote Egypt, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed their heads and prostrated themselves.

However, the supposition on which this interpretation is based, that the paschal-lamb was killed on the threshold of the house, has little probability, and is in itself forced and artificial.—The reason why “nobody should go out from the door of the house until the morning” is obvious. According to tradition this command was given, lest the destroying angel, who made no difference between the righteous and the wicked, might attack and kill them. Clericus remarks: “lest some Egyptians suspect that their countrymen may have been killed by the Israelites.” But our text calls this night “a night of watching” (ver. 42), a time of a solemn and religious sanctity; it was to be spent at home with devotion and pious reflections calculated to impress the mind of the Israelites with the high importance of that critical period, the manifold and arduous duties they undertook by the new covenant entered into with the God of their ancestors and the numerous trials, which awaited them in following His guidance through the trackless desert.

23. *And He will not suffer the destruction to come into your houses to smite you*; this is perfectly the same idea as expressed in ver. 13, where we must also translate *destruction*, not *destroyer*. The ancient, and many of the modern translators have, indeed, here *destroyer*; but not one of them has thereby, like Targum Jonathan and Clericus, understood the *destroying angel*, who executes the plague under the command and direction of God.

Compare 2 Sam. xxiv. 16; Ps. lxxviii. 49, where we have such clear analogy as the 13th verse offers, it is unnecessary to recur to notions of the angelology, dating only from a very late period of Israel's history.

24. *And you shall observe this thing.* It would appear from the context (see vers. 23—27), that the eternal observance here enjoined refers to the marking of the door-posts with the blood of the paschal-lamb (see p. 138); however, the traditional Jewish interpretation has applied it to the general precepts concerning Passover, and limited that ceremony only to that one Passover in Egypt.

25. It is evident, from this verse, that the complete rites of Passover, especially the offering of the paschal-lamb, were only to be observed in the holy land, except one Passover, which was celebrated in the desert in the second year after the exodus, on the especial command of God (Numb ix. 1—5).

26, 27. The many unusual and striking observances of Passover will induce the children to enquire after their origin and meaning; and, by the detailed information which the parents are expected to offer them upon those national subjects, the memory of the great and miraculous events will annually be revived, and operate every year as a renewal of the political covenant between God and Israel. In the service for the two first evenings of Passover, as at present performed, this command has found its entire and solemn realization.

28. The people, who had by a series of

28. And the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

29. And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn of the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne, to the first-born of the captive who *was* in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle: 30. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians, and there

amazing wonders become irresistibly impressed with the omnipotence of God, believed now unreservedly in His faithful messenger, through whom He had per-

formed all these miracles, and with humble submission (ver. 27), they executed all the preparations which had been prescribed to them.

TENTH PLAGUE—DEATH OF THE FIRST-BORN OF EGYPT. Verses 29—33.

29. In spite of the repeated exhortations of Moses, Pharaoh persevered in his obduracy; and thus the last and most fearful of all plagues, which had been threatened at least five or six days before it took place (see ver. 3), became inevitable. It is natural to suppose a pestilence as the basis of this infliction; and, indeed, such fatalities are not unusual in Egypt during the months of March and April, about the season of the exodus of the Israelites. The pestilence in Egypt is generally a concomitant of hot, oppressive winds; and, as the *darkness*, which constituted the ninth plague, was produced, or at least attended by, such infesting storms, especially the Chamsin (see note on x. 21), the succession of these two calamities is founded on the natural and usual phenomena of Egypt. Minutoli (p. 224), remarks: "Pestilence appears in Kairo usually at the end of March or the beginning of April. The miasm is spread by contagion. But local peculiarities may increase its fatal character, and even the prevailing winds are of important influence upon its progress; if the Chamsin blows, the plague increases to a fearful degree and destroys its victims rapidly." The Arabs are accustomed, at the cessation of the Chamsin, to congratulate each other on having survived that period; so ordinarily is that wind accompanied by pestilential diseases. Nor is the exemption of certain portions

of the population from the effects of the calamity, without parallel or analogy. Michaud (vii. p. 29) remarks: "The Bedouins are generally very sober and abstemious; they have no physicians and few diseases; the *eye-pestilence*, which ravages so frequently and destructively in Egypt, is almost unknown to them; and the plague seldom appears among them." However, the following are the miraculous features in our narration: 1. That the pestilence breaks out exactly in the night predicted by Moses; 2. that it rages in that night only; 3. that only the *first-born* die; 4. that the first-born of the cattle are also destroyed; and 5. that the Israelites are entirely free from the influence of the plague. This extraordinary character of the calamity excludes the merely natural interpretation of Eichhorn, that the fetid exhalation of a certain river (Caleg) causes an enormous mortality among the children of those who live near it, and who, therefore, at such periods, remove from its vicinity. But, according to our text, the plague was in *all* parts of Egypt, nor did the children die promiscuously, but only the first-born.—We trust that the uninterrupted climax in the ten inflictions has been sufficiently pointed out, to let the opinion of N. H. Wessely (on Aboth v. 6) "that two severe plagues alternated regularly with one of a less formidable character," at once appear as perfectly unfounded. The mercy of God gave to

was a great cry in Egypt; for *there was* not a house where *there was* not one dead. 31. And he called for Moses and Aaron *in the* night, and said, Arise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as you have said. 32. Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and go; and bless me also. 33. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, to send them out of the land in haste; for they

Pharaoh ample time for repentance. 1. By the signs which preceded the plagues. 2. By the interval between one chastisement and the following; and 3. By the warning announcement which preceded seven of these inflictions. Pauses in the course of the tragic struggle of Pharaoh would, therefore, have been both untimely and unavailing. The seventy-eighth Psalm (ver. 43, *et seq.*), in which but six plagues are mentioned, cannot possibly be adduced as a proof to the contrary; poetical specification is widely different from minute historical narration; a proof of which is the irregularity with which those six plagues are enumerated; the order is so little preserved, that it is obvious, the Psalmist intended merely to offer a general, though emphatical description of God's greatness displayed in favour of His people. — *And all the firstborn of cattle died.* The animals were included in the general destruction on account of the sacredness with which they were regarded by the Egyptians; their sudden annihilation added, therefore, religious grief and mortification to the personal sufferings caused by the death of the nearest relatives (compare note on xi. 6).

30. *For there was not a house where there was not one dead.* The history of the fearful punishments inflicted upon Pharaoh and his subjects is narrated with such emphasis and even tragical pathos, that we cannot be surprised if a poetical hyperbole is sometimes employed to indicate the force and energy with which the inspired writer felt the enormity of those calamities (comp. ix. 18, 24; x. 14, etc.). If, therefore, there was not

in *every* family a first-born son, to be made a victim of death, it is sufficient that the vast majority of the Egyptian houses contained a fearful, though silent witness of divine judgment (see note on ix. 6). But questionable is Rashi's remark (adopted by Calmet, Clarke and others), "that the first-born was smitten in those families where there was one; whilst in the other houses the eldest and most respected individual was destroyed." Although sometimes the most influential individual is called *the firstborn* (Ps. lxxxix. 27; compare Exod. iv. 22); the repeated phrase "the first-born of man and the first-born of *beast*," excludes a figurative acceptance.

31. *And he called*, namely Pharaoh, which the Septuagint adds.

32. The refractoriness of Pharaoh was at last broken, and not only did he allow the departure of the Israelites with their wives, children and cattle, but he added the humiliating request: "pray for me also, when you sacrifice, that the Lord may avert further calamities from me and my people;" so that the words of Moses (x. 25): "Thou must give us also sacrifices, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God," are almost literally verified. The proud king is compelled to entreat for the blessing of those who had hitherto been to him objects of contempt and aversion; so perfect was the victory of the Lord over the obstinacy of the monarch.

33. *For they said, We are all dead men*; Targum Jonathan and Jerusalem translate: "If the Israelites stay here one hour longer, we shall all be dead." These words cannot include an apprehension on the part of the Egyp-

said, *We are all dead men.* 34. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading-vessels being bound up in their clothes, upon their shoulders. 35. And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they ¹asked of the Egyptians ²articles of

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Borrowed.

² Jewels.

tians, that this plague might be sent to destroy all Egyptians, since Moses had clearly stated to Pharaoh, that only the first-born would be struck by the pestilence (xi. 5). Nor can this passage be brought into connection with v. 3: "lest He fall upon us with pestilence," in which words, Ebn Ezra believes, the Egyptians are also included, so that the latter now fear the realisation of this menace; see, however, our note on v. 3. The Egyptians urged the Israelites to depart, because they feared another still more fearful plague, which might kill them all, accustomed as they were to a steady gradation in the dispensations of divine justice.

34. As the Israelites bound their kneading-troughs in their clothes, and took them upon their shoulders, we must understand these troughs to have been rather small and light, perhaps similar to the utensils which the Arabians still use for kneading the dough of their unleavened cakes, and which are merely small wooden bowls, in which the cakes are also preserved. Large kneading-troughs are, indeed, unnecessary in the East, as every family daily bakes the necessary quantity. The thin bread cakes would scarcely preserve themselves for a longer time; they soon become perfectly dry, and are, therefore, mostly eaten fresh. The shape and use of the garments in which the Hebrews carried their troughs upon their shoulders, may be easily imagined after the analogy of the dress at present common among the Bedouins of Asia and Africa, and known under the name of *Haik*. It resembles the *toga* of the Romans, and the *peplum* of the Greeks. Its wide folds above the shoulder make it a useful and appropriate receptacle for all kinds of

portable things. A description of the *Haik* will be found in the note on xxii. 26. About ovens, and the preparation of unleavened bread, compare notes on vii. 27, and xii. 8, 39.

35, 36. See note on iii. 22. The usual interpretation of *lending*, which the Septuagint and Vulgate have first introduced in ver. 36, is as objectionable as the rendering of *borrowing* in iii. 22. We add the following analogous passage from Tacitus (Germ. xxi): "On the departure of a guest, it is the custom to present him with whatever he may ask for; and with the same freedom a boon is desired in return. They are pleased with presents, but think no obligation incurred either when they give or receive."

37. And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth. That Rameses is a province, most probably identical with Goshen, has been remarked on I. 11, to which we refer. The rendering of Targum Jonathan, "from Pelusium," is, therefore, incorrect. It is, however, still more probable to suppose one town than a whole province to have been the place of general meeting; for such a vast number of emigrants required a centre; and the whole plan was no doubt carefully preconcerted, in all its details, among the whole Hebrew population. We believe, therefore, that although Rameses is the whole province of Goshen, they took their departure from a principal town of that district, perhaps Raameses, where they assembled during the general confusion and consternation of the Egyptians caused by the death-spreading pestilence.—The place, which formed the first station of the Israelites after their departure, is here called *Succoth*, i. e., tents or booths. Nomads give this name frequently to the places of their temporary

silver, and articles of gold, and raiment. 36. And the Lord gave the people favour in the eyes of the Egyptians; and ³they gave them gladly. And they plundered Egypt.

37. And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot,

³ *Engl. Vers.*—They lent unto them *such things as they required.*

encampments (as, for instance, Jacob did in Gen. xxxiii. 17, etc.); and it appears from the context, that that station was already called so previous to the Exodus of the Israelites, and that it must have been known as an appropriate locality for pitching the tents of a great number of travellers. — Tradition has fixed the distance between Rameses and Succoth at 40 parasangs or 120 miles; evidently an exaggerated statement, if we consider that it was the journey of one night.—It is impossible now to determine the exact situation of this Succoth; the list in Num. xxxiii. 5, 6, affords no clue; and Josephus does not even mention the same or a similar name, writing thus on the departure of the Israelites (Antiq. II. xv. 1): "So the Hebrews went out of Egypt.... Now they took their journey by Letopolis, a place at that time deserted, but where Babylon was built afterwards, when Cambyses laid Egypt waste," which is improbable, as Babylon was situated in the south of Old Kairo.—Philippon, coinciding with the Pictorial Bible, proposes the following conjecture: "From xiv. 2, it is evident that the Israelites did not at first proceed to the Red Sea, as they afterwards *turned round* to arrive there. According to the position of the places they could, therefore, first only go up to the isthmus of Suez (at the borders of the desert, xiii. 20), consequently to north-east. The course was probably nearly that which is now taken by the pilgrim caravans from Kairo to Mecca, which is not directly eastward, but first by north-east, and then by east, in order to round the 'Arabian mountain' of Herodotus, which, in the east, shuts in the valley of the Nile. On this route, at a distance of about 12 miles N.N.E. from the present Kairo, lies a place, which is

very convenient for an encampment, and where the great pilgrim caravan from Kairo to Mecca awaits the arrival of the western pilgrims previous to its final departure. This is, with much probability, thought to be the Succoth of the text. At this place there is a rather large lake, called Birket-el-Hadj (Pilgrim's Pool), which receives its waters from the Nile, and near which there are several small villages, with country houses and date-plantations belonging to the principal inhabitants of Kairo."—But 1. It is difficult to reconcile this supposition with the statement of Josephus, above quoted; for Babylon, which, in the time of Cambyes, was founded at the place of Letopolis, is situated to the *south*, and not to the *north* of Goshen; 2. The Israelites did, in fact, not travel *north-eastwards*, but *south-eastwards*; in order to reach the Red Sea from Goshen—and in this direction lies Succoth; but as they had gone *too far* southwards, they *returned* (xiv. 2) to the north, until they arrived nearer to the northern extremity of the gulf of Suez, where the passage was practicable (see note on xiv. 2). Kitto himself, in his History of Palestine (I. p. 176), abandons that supposition, believing that, "Succoth must be sought somewhere about a day's journey in the direction towards Suez." The conjecture of Osburn, who identifies Succoth with Xoïs in the centre of the Delta, is as untenable as his supposition concerning the situation of Rameses (see note on v. 1).—*They went out about six hundred thousand men on foot*, i. e., men capable of bearing arms, or as Rashi observes, above twenty years of age (compare Num. i. 3); *besides the children*, "under twenty years" (*Ebn Ezra*).—600,000 men above twenty years (according to Num. i. 46, more accurately

besides the children. 38. And a mixed multitude went up also with them, and flocks, and herds, very much cattle. 39. And they baked the dough which they brought from Egypt into unleavened cakes, for it was not yet

603,550, and 22,000 Levites) justify us in supposing the whole population of the Israelites, including women, children, and servants, to have consisted of at least two and a half million of souls; for the males above twenty years of age are about one half of the total male population; and the females might be put down to the same number. A similar proportion is stated by Cæsar (Bell. Gall. i. 29) concerning the Helvetii, who numbered 92,000 men capable of bearing arms, whilst their whole population, "including children, old men, and women," amounted to 368,000 souls, or exactly four times the former number.—But it has often been found questionable, if not impossible, that the seventy souls, who immigrated into Egypt in the time of Jacob, should, during their sojourn there, have increased to such a great nation. To explain this apparent difficulty, we remind the reader of the following facts and arguments:

1. Among the Hebrews, like the other Eastern nations, polygamy was the rule;
2. They married early, as it is still customary in the East to enter the conjugal life in the thirteenth or fourteenth year;
3. They lived longer, and attained no doubt in the average to an age above ninety years;
4. "By a singular providence of God they were not weakened by pestilence or famine" (*Rosenmüller*);
5. The prodigious fruitfulness of the Hebrews in Egypt is expressly mentioned in i. 7 (where we have quoted similar statements from other ancient writers);
6. The period which elapsed between the immigration of Jacob and the Exodus amounts to 430 years (see Introduction, § 2). Now, if we take a generation to extend about thirty years, and suppose that in the average every man had no more than three sons, the sixty-nine souls (excluding Jacob), trebled in thirty years; this number was again increased to the

three-fold amount in other thirty years; and in fourteen generations they would, after this calculation, amount to about thirty-three millions; and, therefore, no reasonable critic will find the number of two and a half millions impossible or exaggerated; even irrespective of the opinion of Philo (II. p. 210), that the circumcision enhances the fruitfulness. Thus the curious supposition of Bauer (*Hebr. Hist. I. 268*), "that only on their journey at the other side of the Red Sea, a large number of Israelites living in Arabia, joined the stock and general mass of the people [which is against our text] and made up that number"; further, the opinion of Vater, "that the *mixed multitude* which accompanied the people (ver. 38) is included in that number," and several other conjectures require no further comment.—The singular increase of the Hebrews must astonish us the less, if we consider that the land of Canaan, which was but very thinly populated at the time of the emigration of Jacob's family, became, during their sojourn in Egypt, a most populous country, and Jost observes correctly: "the increase of the Israelites since they left Canaan, stands in proportion with the increase of those, who occupied it during that time."—We refer the reader further to the authentic and interesting account concerning the Englishman Pine, who was, in the year 1589, by a shipwreck, thrown, with four females upon a deserted island south-east of the Cape of Good Hope, and whose descendants had, after seventy-eight years (in 1667) increased to more than 11,000 souls.—About the question, how this vast number could, during forty years, find food for themselves and their cattle in the barren and dreary wilderness, which had at the same time to support many other Arab tribes, we refer to our note on xvi. 2.

leavened; because they were driven out of Egypt, and could not tarry; nor had they prepared for themselves any provision. 40. Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, during which they dwelt in Egypt, *was* four

38. *And a mixed multitude went up also with them.* If we compare our passage with Nehem. xiii. 3, it is clear that this means the mass of strangers, Non-Israelites, who joined them on leaving Egypt, and who were by no means a desirable class of associates, as appears from Numb. xi. 4, 5. As the new dynasty, which invaded Lower Egypt, and subdued it (see note on i. 8), no doubt included the native Egyptians in the tyrannical oppression inflicted upon the Israelites, since the same reasons of policy existed for paralyzing the energy of both races (see note on i. 10), many Egyptians, most likely, eagerly seized the opportunity of freeing themselves from the king's tyranny, which they had every reason to fear would, after the departure of the Israelites, still more severely fall upon themselves. The misery which the native Egyptians shared with the Hebrews, engendered that sympathy of the former towards the latter, several instances of which we have already had occasion to point out (see note on iii. 22). That this "mixed multitude" did not accompany the Hebrews, because they were convinced of the truth of the new religious principles, which Moses proclaimed and preached, is obvious from their very name, which distinguishes them clearly from the Israelites, both nationally and religiously, and from the manner in which they are mentioned in the Pentateuch (Numb. xi. 4, 5).

39. *They were driven out of Egypt.* This statement clearly points back to the previous prediction in xi. 1; and the latter forms, therefore, an integral part of the narrative (see note on xi. 1). *Cakes* baked under hot cinders, such as the orientals are still accustomed to make, especially when on a journey, or in haste. "The tribes who are always moving from place to place, bake their bread on a

slightly convex iron plate, called a *sadj*, moderately heated over a low fire of brushwood or camels' dung. The lumps of dough are rolled, on a wooden platter, into thin cakes, a foot or more in diameter, and laid, by means of the roller, upon the iron. They are baked in a very short time" (*Layard, Discoveries in Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 288; where we read also a description of the preparation of unleavened bread by the Bedouins, whilst riding on horse-back, in times of haste or danger). Even in Rome there were no bakers till after the year 580 from the building of the city; "and this," says Pliny (xviii. 11), "was among the occupations of women, as it still is in many countries."—It is clear, from the tenor of our verse, that the Israelites ate unleavened bread after the exodus, not by a command of Moses, but only in consequence of the extraordinary circumstances of that time (see *supra*, p. 138). "The law of God, and the history of Israel, reflect each other; a mere result of chance does not exist in this sphere" Josephus asserts, that the Israelites ate unleavened bread during thirty days after their departure. However, after they reached the eastern shore of the Gulf, there existed no obvious reason why they should not prepare their bread in the usual manner, if they were still provided with flour—which might have been the case, as only after the lapse of thirty days the Israelites complained of want of food (xvi. 1—3).

40. *Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, during which they dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years.* That in spite of differing versions, this is the correct reading, and that, notwithstanding the apparent difficulties, it is to be understood in its literal sense, has been demonstrated in the *Introduction*, § 2, to which we refer.

hundred and thirty years. 41. And it came to pass at the end of four hundred and thirty years, on the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. 42. *It is a night of celebration to the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of celebration to the Lord for all the children of Israel in their generations.*

43. And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, *This is the*

41. *On the self-same day*, that is, on that fourteenth day of Abib, already mentioned (ver. 6; compare ver. 51; xiii. 4).—*All the hosts of the Lord*, that is, the Israelites, who are the people or army of the Lord, under whose immediate leadership they went out from the land of Egypt. This metaphor must, however, not be taken too strictly, as if the Hebrews were the *soldiers* of God, who had to *conquer* the world, and to pitch everywhere the standards of His truth; thus understood, that term necessarily leads to hazardous or artificial conclusions.

42. *It is a night of celebration to the Lord...this is that night of celebration to the Lord for all the children of Israel.* Various are the interpretations proposed on this verse; Rashi observes: "It is called *night of observation*, because God observed and looked out to fulfill His promise to lead them out of Egypt," and finds further in these words an allusion to the fact, that the Israelites were shielded in that night against the devastations of the pestilence (ver. 23). But the expression, *night of celebration*, appears too distinct and characteristic to admit, in the same sentence, of two so different meanings, neither of which, moreover, has much probability in itself. Similar, and therefore liable to the same objections, is the exposition of Ebn Ezra, whom Philippson follows: "because God shielded them, and did not suffer destruction to approach their houses, He ordered, that that night should be observed by all Israelites by eating the paschal-lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs." Other Jewish interpreters understood

it as a night of waking or vigilance, in which the Israelites are to avoid sleep, and which they are bound to pass in pious and devoted prayers connected with the miraculous deliverance from Egypt. If the Hebrew words were, in this acceptance, corroborated by any other parallel passage, that interpretation would deserve particular consideration, as it is well known that the ancients abstained from sleep in such nights, which they considered particularly holy. So, for instance, was the High Priest obliged to be awake in the night of the Day of Atonement. But the traditional practice among the Jews has but very partially observed that night as one of vigilance.

43. The following verses (to ver. 50) contain supplementary precepts with regard to the individuals to be permitted to partake of the paschal-lamb (see p. 135). We have already observed, that, as this whole ceremony was the symbol of the political covenant between God and Israel, it is natural that such persons only could be admitted to it, as had, by circumcision, been *personally* received into the covenant of God: all other individuals were to be excluded. As this injunction was, no doubt, already to be observed at the first celebration of Passover in Egypt, it is justly believed that it was promulgated previous to the exodus (according to tradition on the fourteenth of Nisan); and that its more appropriate place would have been after the 28th verse, but that it has been inserted here to bring it, as a general precept, into closer connection with the law concerning the sanctification of the first-born (xiii. 2).

ordinance of the Pesach: There shall no alien eat thereof: 44. But every ¹male servant who is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then may he eat thereof. 45. A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof. 46. In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt carry forth nothing of the flesh abroad out of the house; nor shall you break a bone thereof. 47. All the congregation of

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Man's.

There shall no alien eat thereof, that is, a Non-Israelite, who has not, by the act of circumcision, entered the covenant of Abraham. The word *alien* is rendered by Targum Onkelos: "an Israelite who has swerved from the strict observance of his religion"; which sense is still more clearly expressed by the ancient reading of the same version: "an apostate Israelite." Rashi follows the former more comprehensive sense, by explaining with the Rabbins: "a man whose deeds have alienated him from his Father in heaven," and a heathen and an unbelieving Israelite are, in this respect, in the same category. Targum Jonathan paraphrases similarly: "every heathen and every Israelite who has become faithless to his religion and has not repented."

44. *When thou hast circumcised him.* This translation is preferable to another usual rendering: "*then* thou shalt circumcise him," which would almost exclude the alternative, that the servant declined entering into the community of Israel; and it would thus appear, that every slave of the Hebrews was compelled to undergo that ceremony; than which nothing could be more foreign to the genius of the Mosaic legislation; and Ebn Ezra remarks expressly: "he is to be circumcised, if this is his wish, and if he is of a mature age, and able to judge in religious matters." Jonathan translates: "when thou hast circumcised and baptized him;" for these two ceremonies, circumcision and baptism, were, according to rabbinical regulations, necessary for every proselyte (see note on xxii. 20). However different the positions were which the members of the Hebrew

community occupied in society, the Mosaic law acknowledges, in a religious respect, no distinction of classes of any kind; all are equally admitted to all the sources and means of grace and salvation; there is no authority of person before the Lord; a feature in the Mosaic dispensation, the more to be appreciated if compared with the invidious exclusiveness of the principal pagan religions of the East.

45. *A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof*: because neither of them, as heathens, stands in a nearer permanent connection with the Israelites; for the former is only tolerated in the land, which he may leave at his option, being bound by no religious duty or obligation; and the latter, if a heathen, may at any time be dismissed, when his services are no longer required: whilst the purchased servant (verse 44) is the permanent property of his Hebrew master, and, therefore, under conditions, admissible to the paschal rites. Ebn Ezra explains: "a Hebrew stranger and a hired servant shall not eat of the paschal-lamb if they have not been duly counted for the lamb" (see verse 4), obviously against the context, which speaks of *uncircumcised* foreigners.

46. The paschal-lamb shall be eaten *in one house*, that is, as Onkelos renders, "in one company;" every Israelite shall finish his paschal meal at the same table with the same co-religionists. This, as well as the precept not to break the bones of the paschal-lamb, are emblems of the unity of Israel, as we have already observed in the introductory survey of the Passover rites, p. 134. About the reason why nothing

Israel shall sacrifice it. 48. And when a stranger will sojourn with thee, and will sacrifice the Pesach to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and sacrifice it, and he shall *then* be as a native of the land: ¹but no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. 49. One law shall be for the native and for the stranger who sojourneth in the midst of you. 50. Thus did all the children of Israel; as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did. 51. And it came to pass on the self-same day, *that* the Lord brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—For.

of the flesh shall be "carried forth out of the house," see note on verse 10.

47. That *all* the congregation of Israel shall eat the paschal-lamb, is emphatically repeated, in order to impress upon the reader unmistakably the principal and leading idea of the whole festival.

48. *And when a stranger will sojourn with thee, and will sacrifice the Pesach to the Lord*, that is, and wishes to perform that sacred ceremony. Before a stranger can be permitted to kill the paschal-lamb, not only he himself but all the male members of his house must undergo the rite of circumcision; for he must eat it with his family (verse 3); and his adherence to Mosaism could not be deemed firm and unshaken, unless all the members of his family had renounced every idolatrous worship.—*But no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.* This sentence sums up, as it were, all the preceding precepts concerning those who are to be allowed to eat the paschal-lamb without allusion to any individual class of persons, as Rashi, Ebn Ezra, and others endeavour to specify.

49. See on verse 19.

50, 51. "And the Israelites did according to the command of Moses and Aaron," which words are repeated from ver. 28, because new precepts regarding the Passover have been added; and the sense is, that the Hebrews executed all these commands, which they had an opportunity of performing, and that they especially admitted to the paschal-lamb those strangers only, who had been circumcised. Unnecessary, therefore, is Ebn Ezra's opinion, that this verse refers prophetically to Num. ix. 5, where the same words occur, since then only the Israelites had occasion to carry out all those injunctions. The same commentator opines, that the 51st verse is to be connected with the beginning of the following chapter, so that the sense is: "at the time of the exodus, God gave the command concerning the sanctification of the firstborn." But the retrospective words: "Thus the Lord brought the children of Israel out of Egypt" conclude appropriately the chapter, in which the history of the exodus has been narrated in detail.

CHAPTER XIII.

SUMMARY.—Besides the repeated injunction of the festival of unleavened bread (vers. 3, 6, 7), two other, specifically Mosaic, laws were enforced in connection with the deliverance from Egypt: 1. About the sanctification of all male firstborn of man and beast (vers. 2, 12, 13; see on ver. 2); and 2. About the phylacteries of the head and the hand, as a remembrance of the exodus from Egypt, and the divine commands (see on ver. 9). At the same time it is repeatedly enjoined, that the history of the miraculous release of Israel, and the meaning of all the laws

based upon it, should be faithfully handed down to the coming generations and preserved in eternal and grateful reminiscence (vers. 8, 14, 15).—The narrative then resumes the march of the Israelites, and points out first the general direction of their journey to the south, towards the desert, not northwards to the land of the Philistines, although this latter would have been the direct and shorter route (see on ver. 17); thus they proceeded from Succoth to Etham, at the northern extremity of the gulf of Suez (see on ver. 20).—The chapter concludes with two other historical remarks: 1. In fulfilment of a promise made to Joseph, the Israelites took his bones with them from Egypt (ver. 19); and 2. God leads the people miraculously on their journey by a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night (see note on vers. 21, 22).

AND the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2. Sanctify to me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, *both* of man and

2. The miraculous events connected with the exodus give rise to another most significant ordinance, which stamps the whole Mosaic legislation perhaps more characteristically than any of its various commands and statutes.—*Sanctify to me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast.* The prerogatives which the firstborn enjoyed in patriarchal institutions, and which are constantly kept in view throughout the Pentateuch, did not only consist in an external preference with regard to property, but in the superior authority, which he exercised in his family, as whose legitimate representative and protector he was acknowledged and respected (see note on xi. 5). The Israelites had, even in their Egyptian bondage, preserved these ancestral notions. It was, therefore, the wise and profound intention of the Mosaic law, to combine all these honoured and influential heads of families into a powerful phalanx for the defence of their national faith, by appointing them to the perpetual religious service, as, indeed, in the patriarchal ages, the house-father, or the eldest member of the family, performed the necessary priestly functions. We must admire the profundity and comprehensiveness of this idea, so eminently calculated to create a thoroughly religious nation, and to secure an unaltered adherence to the holy doctrines. However, the legislator himself felt later the necessity of abandoning it, and of substituting for it a scheme less

derangingly interfering with the social and domestic relations of the people. The tribe of Levi, from which Moses and Aaron had sprung, had on different occasions exhibited a distinguished zeal for the defence of the Law: they “say to the father and to the mother, I have not seen them; and their brothers they acknowledge not, and their children they know not; for they guard the word of God and preserve His covenant” (Deut. xxxiii. 9); and, therefore, later the religious primogeniture of the people was conferred on this tribe; 22,000 Levites took the place of as many firstborn Israelites; and every one of the 273 firstborn, who were still among the people besides that number, was bound to redeem himself with five shekels; and this was instituted as the custom for every future firstborn son in Israel, except those, whose fathers or mothers were of the tribe of Levi (see ver. 13; Num. iii. 11, *et seq.*; 40, *et seq.*). Thus the theocracy, without being converted into a hierarchy, was secured and strengthened by receiving permanent representatives of divine authority (see note on xix. 6).—The same custom prevails still among the Jews, and the ceremony of “redeeming the son” is solemnised on the thirtieth day after the birth of the child (Deut. xviii. 16).—But the firstborn animals also belonged to God, to whom they were to be offered as sacrifices; and it was therefore ordained, that all clean firstborn male beasts be offered from the eighth day

of beast; it *is* mine. 3. And Moses said to the people, Remember this day, on which you went out from Egypt, out of the house of slaves; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from there: nothing leavened shall be eaten. 4. This day are you gone out, in the month Abib. 5. And it shall be, when the Lord will bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which He swore to thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk

of their birth within their first year.—Now, the flesh was, according to Deut. xii. 17, 18, and xv. 19, 20, to be consumed in the holy places by the offering Israelites; whereas, in Num. xviii. 18, it seems to be assigned to the priests: “and their flesh [that of the firstborn animals] shall belong to thee [the priest]; like the wave breast and like the right shoulder it shall be thine.” This apparent contradiction has already been felt by Augustin, who, however, attempted no reconciliation. Ebn Ezra and Jarchi believe, that the commands in Deut. xii. 17, 18, and xv. 19, 20, are addressed to the priests, which is completely against the context and the words. Not happier are the opinions of Gerhard, that they refer to *female* first-born animals; or of J. D. Michaelis, whom Jahn and Bauer follow, that the *first* first-born animal belonged to the priests, the *second* firstborn (!) to the Israelites; or of Eichhorn, who simply supposes—a mistake. But the addition in Num. xviii. 18: “like the wave breast and like the right leg it shall be thine,” fully decides the question. The *blood* and the *fat* belonged to God (ver. 17); and if we compare herewith Lev. vii. 28, *et seq.*, we find that the *breast* and the *right leg* were the portions of the priest; *all the other parts were retained and consumed by the Israelite*. And thus exists the greatest harmony between the different precepts concerning the firstborn of animals. (Compare Exod. xxix. 27, 28; Lev. x. 14, 15).—If they had a blemish, they were to be killed and eaten at home (Deut. xv. 21, 22); others suppose, less probably, that they were

given to the priests as their property. But the firstborn of unclean animals, as horses, camels, or asses (Num. xviii. 15), was either to be redeemed by a clean animal, with the addition of the fifth part of its value, or it was to be killed (Lev. xxvii. 26, 27). If we add hereto, that the firstlings of all agricultural produce were also holy to the Lord, we have a comprehensive and consistent framework of a theocratical legislation, creating and cementing an immediate connection between God as the monarch, and Israel as His subjected people (compare note on xxii. 28, 29).—The law of the sanctification of the firstborn is in our text (ver. 15) based upon the circumstance, that the firstborn of Israel remained uninjured at the general destruction of the firstborn sons of the Egyptians, who were thus smitten because they had oppressed Israel, the *firstborn son of God* (iv. 22, 23). This was the idea, which the Israelites at all times, since the days of Moses, combined with that law, the character of which is in no way influenced by the fact, that, indeed, in all primitive or natural religions, the firstborn of men and animals were sacred to the respective deities; or by the concession, that the Israelites were, perhaps, even before Moses familiar with that idea. We observe here the same skilful commutation of an idolatrous rite into a pure religious notion, which we have already had occasion to notice in a striking instance (see p. 139, 140).—We read in Wilson's Commentary: “Aristotle was of opinion that all sacrifices to the Deity originated in the idea,

and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month. 6. Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day *shall* be a feast to the Lord. 7. Unleavened bread shall be eaten those seven days; and there shall nothing leavened be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee, in all thy boundaries. 8. And thou shalt ¹tell thy son in that day, saying, *This is done* because of that *which* the Lord did to

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Show.

that he would be gratified by the return of his choicest gifts. Hence Abraham's readiness to put to death his only son at a supposed demand from above. Agreeably to this precedent, remarks Mr. Mackay, the claim to the firstborn forms the great prerogative of God's supremacy." But the Mosaic law concerning the firstborn sons has no connection whatever with *sacrifices*, much less with *human* sacrifices; and the offering of Isaac was not the *custom*, but an unusual exception, and an extraordinary trial.—Even in our time the firstborn Israelites keep the fourteenth day of Nisan as a fast, in grateful commemoration of the miracle wrought for their ancestors.—*Whatsoever openeth the womb*, that is, the firstborn of the *mother*, not of the father;.... *it is mine*, for God had rescued the firstborn of Israel, and might thus consider them as His especial property.

3. *From the house of slaves*, that is, from the country, where they were severely treated like despised bondsmen; and hence Egypt is frequently denoted the *iron furnace* of the Israelites (Deut. iv. 20; 1 Kings viii. 51; Jer. xi. 4; see note on i. 14).

5. Here five tribes of the Canaanites are mentioned, whilst, naturally, all the others are also included. In Gen. xv. 19, ten, in Deut. vii. 1, seven, and in Exod. iii. 8, 17, six nations of Canaan are enumerated, without any difference in the real meaning; the more important nations imply the weaker tribes also; and in Josh. i. 4, even the whole *ideal* land

of the Israelites, to the Lebanon and the Euphrates, is called the land of the Hittites. The additions of the Samaritan and Alexandrine Versions in our text, are, therefore, uncalled for. It is evident, from the context, that the killing of the paschal-lamb is chiefly to be understood by "this service," as that was only, according to Deut. xvi. 5—7, to be sacrificed "in the place which the Lord chose for Himself to dwell in," although we must admit that it was offered in the desert of Sinai, in the time of Moses (Numb. ix. 1—5), and, according to Josh. v. 10, 11, in Gilgal, under the leadership of Joshua. The precept about the unleavened bread, however, was, no doubt, observed always during the seven days from the fifteenth to the twenty-first of Abib (see xii. 15, 16).

6. *Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread.* The Samaritan and Septuagint Versions have here *six* days, apparently leaning on Deut. xvi. 8, where we read: "six days shalt thou eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day is the final assembly to the Lord thy God." But the sense of this verse is, that six days unleavened bread shall be eaten, but that on the seventh, besides this observance, a holy convocation shall be held; or that unleavened bread shall be eaten during six days *besides* the first, the celebration of which had been treated more fully in the preceding verses. *And on the seventh day shall be a feast to the Lord.* See note on xii. 16.

9. ON PHYLACTERIES.

It was the wise intention of the legis-

me when I went out of Egypt. 9. And it shall be for a sign to thee upon thy hand, and for a memorial between

lator, to make the great act of the Egyptian redemption as profitable for virtue and morality as its nature would allow. Not easily was, in the history of the Hebrew nation, an event to be expected, the grandeur of which was so much calculated to rouse all minds, however obtuse, and lastingly to impress them with the omnipotence and loving Providence of the God of their fathers. Therefore, besides the observances already established, besides the Passover with its numerous rites—the appointment of the month of Abib as the first of the year—and the sanctification of the first-born—a series of other precepts was introduced which tended to keep in permanent and lively commemoration both that great event and the precepts of the Law, which was the ulterior and proper end of Israel's redemption (iii. 12); and thus to exercise a beneficial influence upon the ennoblement of the heart and the improvement of conduct. For a people little practised in abstract ideas, and sunk in slavish mental torpor, the prudent legislator thought it advisable to facilitate the understanding of the laws by visible, external symbols and signs; and, for this purpose, he chose: 1. Memorials to be borne on the arm and the forehead (phylacteries *Tefillin*); 2. Memorials to be written on the doorposts of the houses (*Mesusoth*, Deut. vi. 9; xi., 20); and 3. Fringes and threads, to be worn on the borders of the garments (*Zizith*, Numb. xv. 37—41); with respect to which it is expressly said (ver. 39, 40): "and you shall see them and shall remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them." These three precepts, and the practical support they afford, are comprised in the following talmudical passage: "He who has *Tefillin* on his head and his arm—and *Zizith* on his garment—and a *Mesusah* on his door—has every possible guarantee that he will not sin."

We shall here speak only of the first symbol, the *Tefillin*. And herein, also,

Moses judiciously leaned on the custom of eastern nations, to write important sentences of religion or of wordly wisdom on paper, or linen strips, and to wear them round the neck or on the forehead; or even to burn into the hand all kinds of significant signs with the ashes of *Henna*, which produces an indelible colour. Now, if according to heathen notions such strips were supposed, like amulets, to be a preservative against dangers and misfortunes, Moses refining or spiritualizing this belief, could justly assert, that indeed the observance of the divine commandments, which were symbolized by the *Tefillin*, was the most efficacious protection against all the trials and vicissitudes of fate. Our passage, however, affords very little information about the nature of this symbol; it says merely: "And it shall be for a sign to thee upon thy hand, and for a memorial between thy eyes." Nor can we derive any distinct inferences from the other passages, which treat of the same commandment (ver. 16; Deut. vi. 8, and xi. 18), where only instead of *memorial*, the obscure expression generally translated *frontlets* is used. Therefore a not inconsiderable number of interpreters have conceived the whole phrase metaphorically, so that its meaning would be: the miraculous redemption from Egypt, all precepts connected with it, and, generally, the whole Law, shall unchangingly live in your hearts and minds, and constitute the invariable rule for all your actions. It must be admitted, that similar figurative phrases are found in other Biblical books; but this is only the case in *poetical* portions, as Prov. iii. 3: "Bind them (the commandments) round thy neck, write them on the tablet of thy heart;" vi. 21: "Bind them (the precepts of thy father) always on thy heart, fasten them on thy neck;" vii. 3: "Bind them on thy finger, write them on the tablet of thy heart." Compare also Isaiah xlix. 18; Cant. viii. 6; Jer. xxii. 24; Haggai ii. 23. But, although

thy eyes, that the Law of the Lord may be in thy mouth; for with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of

our verse, considered by itself, does not exactly exclude a similar interpretation, yet partly the connection in which that precept stands in other passages, and partly the analogy with similar symbols, forbids such conception. For, 1. In Deut. vi. 9, and xi. 20, those words are followed by the precept: "and thou shalt write them on the door-posts of thy house and on thy gates;" and, as this command is not to be taken figuratively, but literally, so our passage also; 2. The commandment about the fringes shows unmistakably the tendency of the Mosaic law, by all kinds of *symbols* to stimulate and excite the mind to the exercise of the moral precepts; to this comes 3. as Philpsson rightly observes, that in our verse the *end* of the external action is immediately introduced by the words "*that* the Law of the Lord may be in thy mouth," whereas the simple conjunction *and* would be required, if the preceding words had the same internal, figurative meaning.

The Biblical text speaks only in general terms of this precept; it decides nothing on the form of those memorials, what they must contain and how and when they are to be worn. The only nearer qualification is suggested by the expression: "you shall *bind* them." Further, according to the precept of our text, these *bands* were of a double nature: on the hand, and "between the eyes," that is, on the forehead. In the later Jewish literature the word *Tefillin* is applied to this memorial; which signifies most probably "prayer-thongs." In Matt. xxiii. 5, they are called phylacteries (*φυλακτήρια*), which would, after the easiest derivation, concur with remembrance or memorial; to translate this word by "protecting amulets," is too artificial; certainly this signification was not attached to the word in the Apostle's time. For further etymological deductions we refer to our larger edition.

Now tradition has made the most extended use of the liberty left to it

with regard to the Tefillin by the indistinctness of the text, and has compiled very minute precepts concerning their arrangement and their use. In accordance with the text were ordered, phylacteries of the hand and phylacteries of the head. They consist of small square leather boxes, the former with one leather thong, which is tied round the left arm and the fingers; the latter with a double thong, which hangs down at both sides of the head. The box contains, on parchment-strips, the following four sections from the Pentateuch: 1. About the sanctification of the first-born, Exod. xiii. 1—10; 2. Further precepts about the same subject, ver. 11—16; 3. The observance of the Law and its injunction to the rising generation, Deut. vi. 4—9; and 4. The blessing attending the strict adherence to the divine precepts, Deut. xi. 13—21; which four passages, according to the Kabbalah, signify the wisdom, the reason, the grandeur, and the power of God; and an old Hebrew work says on this point: "And these four portions have been chosen in preference to all the other passages of the Pentateuch, because they embrace the submission under the yoke of the kingdom of heaven, and the unity of the Creator, and the exodus from Egypt; and these are the fundamental doctrines of Judaism; therefore we are commanded to put them on the forehead and on the tablets of the heart; for, according to the philosophers, those two parts of the body are the seats of reason and of feeling; and by applying to them the phylacteries, those faculties are strengthened, and produce a higher degree of piety and religious obedience." And in accordance with this idea, the phylacteries of the hand are put on the upper part of the left arm, just opposite the heart—the source of feeling,—and those of the head on the brow, there where the marrow of the brain—the seat of understanding—is supposed to commence.

Manifold are the other symbolical inter-

Egypt. 10. Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year.—11. And it shall be, when the Lord will bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to thee and thy fathers, and will give it thee, 12. That thou shalt set apart to the Lord all that openeth the womb, and every firstborn which is brought forth by a beast, which thou hast; the males *shall be* to the Lord. 13. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break its neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy ¹sons shalt thou redeem. 14. And it shall be when thy

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Children.

pretations by which it has been tried to elucidate the idea of the Tefillin, and of which we shall adduce but a few more. According to the Talmud, Abraham received already the commandment concerning the fringes and the Tefillin; and as he was by the former, as it were, invested with the *priestdom*, so by the latter with the *kingdom*; so that the Tefillin of the arm signify the *power*, those of the head the *diadem* or the *crown*. But this kingdom is not of an earthly but a heavenly or religious character; for it is only intended to arm the Israelite with the *power* of self-denial, the chief of all moral duties, and procure him the *triumph* over the realms of sin. In this acceptance, the *thongs*, which are fastened to the boxes, would symbolize the *self-fettering* by the divine commands, and thus coincide with the innermost essence of religion itself. In the book Cusari (iii. 11) we read an explanation of the Tefillin, which is based upon the simple wording of our text: "Thus the Israelite unites his thoughts with God by certain observances, which either Holy Writ or tradition has taught him. He wears Tefillin at the head, the organ of the faculty of reflection and memory; and lets from thence hang down thongs which reach to the hand, and which he shall see at every hour; he wears further the Tefillin of the hand, issuing from the heart, the source of our powers. Those portions, which are writ-

ten in the Tefillin, relate to the unity of God, to reward and punishment, and the exodus from Egypt, because this is an undeniable proof that God is invisibly connected with His creatures, watches over them with His providence, and knows their deeds."

Although the phylacteries were originally, at least by pious persons, worn throughout the whole day (see Cusari *loc. cit.*), their use was later limited to the time of the morning prayer (except on the Sabbaths and festivals), and to the men; and, in this circumstance no doubt the name "prayer-thongs" originates. All these details are already ascribed to Moses, and, from this reason, observed with the greater strictness. Certain it is, that this so striking commandment of the Tefillin, daily practised and executed, has contributed, not a little, to keep the Jews in their dispersion after the exile, in their peculiarity and in strict Mosaism: and thus the end of the legislator was, in this point also, completely accomplished.

10. *Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance*, i. e. *Passover*, with all its specified rites; for the text, after having briefly inserted the precept concerning the phylacteries, returns now to the leading idea which occasioned that precept.—Jonathan erroneously refers "this ordinance" to the precept of the phylacteries and paraphrases: "and thou shalt keep

son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say to him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of slaves: 15. And it came to pass, when Pharaoh hardened himself *not* to let us go, that the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the first-born of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all the males that open the womb; but all the firstborn of my ²sons I redeem. 16. And it shall be for a sign upon thy hand, and for frontlets between thy eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt.

² *Engl. Vers.*—Children.

this commandment of the Tefillin in its proper time; on work days, not on the Sabbaths or festivals; and by day, not by night."

11. The law concerning the sanctification of the first-born, which had been alluded to only in general terms (verse 2), is here (to verse 15) more fully developed; and it appears, from our verse, that the execution of that precept was only to be enforced after the conquest of the Holy Land by the Israelites, as was the case with the sacrifice of the paschal-lamb; see on verse 5.

12. *Thou shalt set apart.* This correct rendering of the English Version is in accordance with the explanation of Ebn Ezra: "thou shalt put it aside for the Lord, lest it be mixed and confounded with other beasts," with the interpretation of Rashi, and the translation of the Septuagint; see Numb. xxvii. 8.—*The male first-born* only were to be sanctified to God; see note on verse 2.

13. *And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb,* with the addition of the fifth part of its value, according to Levit. xxvii. 27. Although the same precept applies to all kinds of unclean animals, as horses and camels (as is evident from Numb. xviii. 15), the firstborn of the *ass* is here expressly mentioned, because this was, probably, the only species of beasts of burden which the Israelites possessed after the exodus;

and the tradition has embellished this fact by attributing that distinction to the asses on account of the services they did to the Israelites in carrying their golden treasures from the land of their oppressors. *Thou shalt redeem with a lamb.* The priest receives a lamb for himself, and then the firstborn ass is allowed for the use of the Israelites.—*And if thou wilt not redeem it then thou shalt break its neck.* This precept, to kill an unredeemed male unclean animal, implies no "blood-steeped cruelty" (*Wilson*), since it was in the power of the owner to redeem it; but in order to ensure the scrupulous and faithful execution of this command, on which the whole structure of the Mosaic theocracy is based (see on ver. 2); the legislator wished to deter from transgressing it by the severe injunction of putting such unredeemed animal to death, which has undoubtedly been done but in very few cases, as it would have been to the owner's pecuniary injury.—*And all the firstborn of men among thy sons shalt thou redeem* with five shekels, according to Num. iii. 47.

15. *The Lord smote all the firstborn of Egypt* (and rescued our firstborn, and those of our cattle), *therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all male firstlings*, naturally with the restriction regarding the unclean animals (ver. 13). The sanctification of the firstborn took place, not on account of the death of the firstborn of the Egypt-

17. And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had allowed the people to go, that God led them not *on* the way of the land of the Philistines, although that *was* near; for God said, Lest perhaps the people repent when they see war,

tians, but in memory of the preservation of those of the Israelites. These, and the similar precepts, are the only regulations of the Mosaic law concerning the education of the children; all the rest was left to the exigencies of the times, and the individual judgment of the parents.

16. See note on ver. 9.

17. After the people has been instructed in all the laws called forth by the departure from Egypt, the narrative proceeds with the further journeys and fates of the Israelites. First, the general direction of their wanderings is distinctly thus stated: "God did not lead the Israelites the shorter way through the territory of Philistia, but ordered them to take the opposite route to the desert of the Red Sea." This is clear in itself. From Rameses to Gaza, the most southern town of the Philistine Pentapolis, is a straight and much frequented way of eight to ten days, either northwards, through the pass of Dshebel-el-Tih as Russegger travelled (iii. 55), or more eastwards, through that of Dshebel-el-Edshmeb (*Robinson*, i. 124, 438); and the sons of Jacob journeyed, in not many days, from Palestine to Egypt, to buy corn. But, instead of taking this way northwards, they turned to the south or south-east, encamping first in Succoth (see note on xii. 37), and thence proceeding in the same direction to the extreme point of the Gulf of Suez, to Etham, which naturally forms, at the same time as it were, the *boundary* of the desert of the peninsula of Sinai (ver. 20). From the very beginning this had been the intention of Moses in his scheme of deliverance, for he had invariably requested Pharaoh to permit the Israelites to sacrifice in the *desert*, and already, at the first revelation of God on Horeb, it was announced to him, that the descendants of Jacob would serve God at that mountain

(iii. 12). It is true, that this route is little inviting or to be recommended; both the wide, barren, and waterless sand-plains, and the wild, rocky and rugged mountainous tracts, seem little advantageous for the march or the maintenance of such a vast number of emigrants. But the reasons which induced Moses to choose this way are as obvious as they are convincing. First, he apprehended, that if the Israelites should see the necessity of fighting with the powerful and warlike Philistines, they would avail themselves of the little distance which separated them from Egypt, and timidly return to the old yoke of slavery, rather than venture a doubtful combat for liberty, fame and property. And, indeed, the Israelites, who had just escaped, as if from a dungeon, a mass without discipline and without energy, were not yet, in any degree, prepared for regular warfare (see note on xiv. 10), and much less enabled to encounter a tribe which they were, even in the height of their power, incapable of perfectly subduing, and to which they, in future ages, succumbed more than once. Hereto may be added, that even then the Philistines were inimically opposed to the Israelites (1 Chron. vii. 21, 22); and no doubt seized eagerly every opportunity of punishing, by new triumphs, the boldness of the Hebrew freebooters. Already in the times of Joshua, the Philistines appeared in a federal union of five states, governed by their respective chiefs, the principal towns of which were: Gaza, Ashdod, Askelon, Gath and Ekron, besides many other open villages (1 Sam. vi. 18). Moses, therefore, with the same moderation with which he had repressed, for more than forty years, his fiery patriotism for the deliverance of his people, in order not to endanger the success of his important undertaking by rash

and they return to Egypt: 18. But God ¹let the people turn to the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea: and the people of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Led the people about through the way.

and untimely attempts, chose here, likewise, the more laborious and wearisome but more certain and promising plan, first to accustom his uncivilised co-religionists to fatigues and hardships by a long and tiresome march in the desert; then to lead them, by a new comprehensive and noble religious system, to morality and to obedience to their invisible guide, and His earthly representative; further to train them to military discipline and martial virtue by occasional expeditions against weaker tribes of the desert; and then at last, thus internally and externally organised, to bring them by long circuits from the east of the Jordan into the land of promise. This plan was conceived by Moses with such self-denial, that he scarcely seems to have considered, whether he would himself have the happiness and glory to witness and to enjoy the results of such a protracted and complicated expedition; but for this modest disinterestedness and moderation, which almost reaches the limits of humanity, rests on his name the blessing of his people to the latest generations; for it was only by this moderation, that the ultimate success of the hazardous undertaking was secured. Thus were the forty years of wandering through the desert a time of trial, of purification, and of religious preparation for their national independence (see Deut. viii. 2; Hos. ii. 16). By these considerations the following groundless and often repeated remark of Göthe finds its refutation: "The picture of a man, who, like Moses, was by his nature driven to the highest aims, must be quite disfigured, if we see a vigorous, resolute, quick man of active life, without meaning[?] or necessity, roam about on a small territory and in the face of his great aim, with an enormous number of men" (compare note to xvi. 2; see also Num.

xiv. 23, 30).—Those commentators, who like Philippon, place Succoth *north-east* of Rameses, that is just in the direction of the land of the Philistines, are compelled to suppose, that the plan of the journey was already altered at Succoth, and that the Israelites returned there already, whereas this only took place after the following station in Etham (see note on xiv. 1—3). Now, according to the notions and the language of the Pentateuch, this divine plan serves at the same time as a means for further ends, namely for the glorification of the name of God among the nations, for an exhortation to renounce the idols and to adore the omnipotent Lord of the Universe, and for the chastisement of refractory minds, especially the still hard-hearted despot of Egypt (xiv. 3, *et seq.*).—God led them not in the way of the land of the Philistines, "*although* that was near." Many ancient and modern interpreters translate here: *because* that was near. But we have retained the translation of *although*, as offered in the English Version, and adopted also by Gesenius and others; for it is sophistical to say, that a person does not take a certain route, just *because* it is the shortest; on the contrary, the inspired author deems it necessary, to anticipate the objection of the reader in this respect; and then only to add the reason, why they, in spite of that argument in its favour, did not take that way: "*for God said,*" etc. But in fact the significations of *because* and *although* are here closely connected; if we translate: they did not go the way of the Philistines, "for this would have been the nearest route"; this parenthetical *for* approaches in its sense very nearly to *although*.

18. But God let the people turn to the way of the wilderness. The signification of these words cannot be doubtful after the

Egypt. 19. And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him; for he had solemnly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely 'remember you; then you shall

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Visit.

explanation of the preceding verse; only the general *direction* of the march, not its *nature* shall here be described; the Israelites did not journey towards the land of the Philistines, but they turned just away from it to the southern line towards the desert. Those translations which deviate from this acceptation destroy the clearness of the text; and thus the English Version, which renders: "But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness."—*The way of the wilderness of the Red Sea*; see note on x. 19, and ii. 3.

19. Moses took the bones of Joseph, i. e. probably his mummy, with him from Egypt, according to the wish of the latter, expressed to his surviving brethren before his death (Gen. i. 24, 25); and in Joshua xxiv. 32, it is faithfully recorded, that the remains of their illustrious ancestor were, in accordance with his request piously handed down to the following generations by tradition, interred in the ground of Shechem, which Jacob already had bought, for himself and his descendants, as an eternal property. Since Joseph, as formerly Jacob, firmly relied on the divine promise, that the land of Canaan would be assigned to their descendants as a permanent possession, and that Egypt was only a place of temporary sojourning for them; and as the ancients, longed, even after their death, to lie in their native earth, abhorring the idea of being buried among strangers, whom they regarded either as barbarians or idolators: the commands of Jacob and Joseph, to bring their bodies back into the land of their forefathers, are expressly mentioned, and their execution is repeatedly narrated.

20. *And they journeyed from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness.* The situation of Etham is here described with sufficient precision. If we are compelled to suppose, as has

been shown on ver. 17, that, from the commencement, the march into the Arabian desert, towards the Mount Horeb, was the design of Moses; and if, therefore, Succoth, the first station, was situated in a *south-eastern* direction from Rameses (xii. 37); Etham, in the same direction at the end of the Arabian desert, on the side of Egypt, and, therefore, near to the head of the Gulf of Suez, formed the second resting-place. The same name denoted, according to Num. xxxiii. 8, a part of the desert east of that Gulf, which is also called the desert of Shur (xv. 22), and the whole part round the extremity of the isthmus bears the common name of the desert of Dschofar. Jablonsky (Op. ii. p. 157) believes that the name Etham itself, which he thinks to be of Egyptian origin, signifies "the end of the sea." Niebuhr considers the little fortress Adjeroud garrisoned with Egyptian troops, as the Etham of our text. It lies about eleven English miles north-west of the town of Suez, generally forms the third stage of the pilgrim's caravan (proceeding from Kairo to Mecca), and has copious wells of water, one of which is two hundred and fifty feet deep. Winer believes with Du Bois Aymé, that the following station Pi-hahiroth, (xiv. 2), is Adjeroud (see, however, on xiv. 2). Positive identifications of ancient localities are the more precarious in this region, as it is certain that the northern part of the Gulf of Suez has formed itself, in the course of centuries, into firm land, a fact which, besides other reasons, is indisputably established by the circumstance that towns, as Muza, which are mentioned by the ancients as sea-places and harbours, are now situated in the interior of the land. The whole Gulf extended 90,000 paces, with an average breadth of 18,000 or 20,000 paces. But, from this point of view, a town, which lies at present eleven

take my bones up hence with you. 20. And they journeyed from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. 21. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by

miles from Suez, might formerly have been situated at "the edge of the desert," but yet considerably to the west of the coast of the Gulf. "Besides," remarks Kitto, "from hence the sea is seen to make a bend to the west, and, by joining the high chain of Mount Attaka, to terminate the desert to the south."

21, 22. *God guided the Israelites in the day by a pillar of cloud and in the night by a pillar of fire.* This circumstance is here evidently reported as a miraculous interposition and special providence of God; and it is inadmissible to interpret it as a merely natural occurrence. Both in our passage and in many others (xiv. 19, 24; Numb. x. 34; xiv. 14; Deut. i. 33; Psal. cv. 39; Neh. ix. 12, etc.), that event is represented in such a manner that we should indeed be compelled to do violence to the text, if we attempted to draw it from the region of the miraculous. The pillars serve to the Hebrew army as a guide (Exodus xl. 36, *et seq.*) and protector (Psal. cv. 39); whenever the army encamped they stayed over the holy tent (Exod. xl. 34; Numb. ix. 15); God Himself is present in them (Num. xiv. 14) and speaks out of them to Moses (Exod. xxxiii. 9; Numb. xii. 5); and the prophet Isaiah (iv. 5) sees in the protecting shadow of the pillar of cloud, and in the shining light of the pillar of fire, a symbol of the eternal presence of God, ever shielding and glorifying Zion. It is true, both our more enlightened notions regarding the providence and interference of God, and indisputable historical analogies, invite us urgently to a symbolical or rational interpretation. In the former respect Ebn Ezra already remarks: "We know that the Lord thrones in eternal majesty in heaven; but the Scriptures speak like the language of men; *because the power of God accompanied the Israelites.*" But the same interpreter is, on the other hand, so

deeply convinced of the reality of the miracle, that he offers remarks on the shape of the pillars, which he says did not, like other clouds, expand to all directions, but reached like columns from heaven to earth. In the same manner fluctuates Abarbanel, who, on the one side, explains the pillars figuratively, as symbols of God's providence which went before them to ward off every evil; and, on the other side, points out the *wonder* with particular emphasis. As to the historical analogies, they are of a very varied character. Xenophon mentions in his Spartan republic, in describing the military expedition of a Spartan king, that a servant or officer, who was called *fire-bearer*, preceded the king with the fire, which had been taken from the altar, on which he had just before sacrificed at the frontier of the Spartan territory. After they had sacrificed once more, and the march had commenced, a fire which was lighted at the second sacrifice preceded the lines, without ever extinguishing. In Curtius v. 2 we read: "He (Alexander the Great) ordered a lofty pole, visible from all sides, to be raised over the general's tent, and from the top of this pole streamed a signal conspicuous everywhere to every one, *smoke by day and fire by night.*" Alexander had in this, as in many other points, imitated the custom of the Persians, who, in common with most of the eastern nations, on their marches through deserted regions, bear before the army high poles, on which iron pots are affixed, filled with lighted combustibles; so that the smoke by day, and the flame by night, signalled the way to the troops. Further parallels are quoted in our larger edition. Thus we cannot but acknowledge a certain curious similarity between the Biblical miracle and a general military custom prevailing in the East. Under these circumstances we entirely

night in a pillar of fire, to give them light, to go by day and night: 22. 'The pillar of the cloud did not cease by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from* before the people.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—He took not away the pillar, etc.

approve of Faber's remark (Archæol. of the Hebrews, p. 244): "Both the miracle and the custom, collated and compared, give light to each other. The custom effects, that we find the miracle dignified and worthy of God; and the miracle shows, that that very custom cannot have been quite unknown to the Israelites." As the Hebrew army could by day, on account of the exceeding heat, march but little and slowly, they continued their journeys also in the cooler nights; and thus they required a guide both in the

day and in the night. Which shape the pillar had, whether it was a single or a double one, whether it appeared immediately after the exodus or only after the transit over the Red Sea; these and many similar questions with which, besides a host of ancient authors, even Rosenmüller has troubled himself, are futile, and we leave them willingly to those who criticise rather from the suggestions of a lively imagination than from facts of holy or profane records. Compare also Cusari i. 97.

CHAPTER XIV.

SUMMARY.—God commands Moses to go back to the north and to encamp in Pi-hahiroth (see on ver. 1—3); Pharaoh, therefore, believing that the Israelites have lost their way in the desert, and repenting his having allowed so many useful slaves to depart, pursues them with six hundred battle-chariots and a great army. When the Israelites saw them approach towards the evening, they murmured against Moses, reproaching him with his rash and heedless plans. God, however, encouraged him with the promise of a miraculous deliverance. The pillar of cloud placed itself behind the army of Israel, and separated it during the whole night from that of the Egyptians; the one had light, whilst the other was surrounded with darkness. God now dried up the sea by a strong wind; the waves divided themselves, and stood to the right and to the left like a wall. The Egyptians pursued their enemies; but it was with great difficulty only that they could follow with their chariots; towards the morning their confusion became complete; they thought of return and flight. The Israelites had in the mean time accomplished the passage over the sea; when God led the waters back to their usual bed—and all the Egyptians, with their horses and chariots, found their graves in the billows.—Confidence and faith in God and His servant Moses, were, on the part of the Israelites, the immediate results of this extraordinary protection of God.

AND the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2. Speak to the children of Israel, that they 'return, and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea,

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Turn.

1, 3. We are accustomed to see the next movement of the Hebrews from Etham, which must have been decisive for their whole journey, so represented, that from here still the two ways were left to them, either to proceed to the north, towards the territory of the Philis-

tines, or, declining to the south-east, to direct their march into the desert of Sinai, towards Mount Horeb (see on xiii. 17); but that, to the great surprise of the Egyptians, who no doubt carefully watched their journey, through scouts, they took neither of these two usual

over against Baal-Zephon : before it shall you encamp by the sea. 3. ² And Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel,

² *Engl. Vers.*—For.

routes, but, in apparently inexplicable infatuation, *returned* to the *western* coast of the Gulf of Suez, nearer to Egypt, evidently into the very arms of their sanguinary and menacing enemies. But the absolute improbability, nay impossibility of such a route, we shall, in the course of this note, have opportunity of showing. For the explanation of our text, we remark, that the Israelites had evidently, in the precipitation of their march, advanced too far to the south; and Moses observed, with terror, that if, as was to be foreseen, they were pursued in the west by the Egyptians, the passage through the more and more widening Red Sea in the east would become impossible for them, whilst, in the south, they would be shut up by mountains and impervious passes. Moses was, therefore, compelled, at every risk, to return northwards, relying upon the existence of passable fords in the extreme part of the Gulf, if unexpected danger should threaten them from the Egyptians. It is certainly possible, as some interpreters assert, that Etham was already the *third* day's journey, and that, therefore, the Egyptians persecuted the Israelites then only, when they saw that they did not, in accordance with their pretence, sacrifice, and when it was evident that this had only been a pretext to effect their escape. But it is, on the other hand, as probable, that they made, just on the third day, that unfortunate march to the south, although the text offers no information how far they proceeded in that direction (see note on ver. 9 *sub finem*). However this may be, that backward movement of the Hebrew army naturally suggested to the Egyptians the idea: "they are entangled in the land; the wilderness hath shut them in," and enhanced their assurance to pursue the confused troops, and to force them to an ignominious return. Now it is of the highest importance, distinctly to bear in mind a circumstance, to which we

have already alluded in our note on xiii. 20, that the Gulf of Suez (Heroopolites Sinus) extended, in former millenniums, considerably farther to the north (as even now, in a distance of 60,000 metres north of Suez, is found a marshy plain about 12,000 metres broad, which exhibits undeniable traces that in former ages the sea had covered this part); that therefore Etham could lie "at the end of the (Egyptian) desert," without just coinciding with the most northern point of the Gulf, and that thus the Hebrew army, having arrived at Etham, might have become aware of the danger in venturing a march so far to the south, and seen the necessity to return northwards. In harmony with these circumstances, we shall have to fix the position of this new camping-place, "before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-Zephon." Pi-hahiroth, which certainly has the sound of a Hebrew name ("entrance of passes or caverns"), is probably, as Jablonsky conjectures, of Egyptian origin, and signifies a place overgrown with reeds. Pi is the Egyptian article, therefore the same place is, in Numb. xxxiii. 7, 8, simply called Hahiroth. The opinion mentioned by Rashi, that Pi-hahiroth is identical with Pithom in i. 11, deserves no notice.—Migdol, originally *tower*, or, as an Egyptian word, "abundance of hills," is, by Ezekiel (xxix. 10; xxx. 6), mentioned as a northern frontier town of Egypt, over against the southern town of Syene (which is twelve Roman miles from Pelusium), near which Pharaoh Necho defeated the invading Syrians (*Herod.* ii. 159). Certainly, by this general statement we gain little for the exact position of the Hebrew station. The Septuagint also renders it *Magdolon*, a town situated near the Pelusian arm of the Nile, in Coptic *Meschtol*, which name has preserved itself in the Arabic *Meschtul*. But this also is much too indistinct, although the

They *are* entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. 4. And ¹I shall harden Pharaoh's heart, that

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Will.

Migdol of our text might, according to our explanation, have been situated much more to the north. Hengstenberg (Moses und Ägypt. p. 58, 59) believes, therefore, that the designation "between Migdol and the sea," does not describe the exact geographical position of the place, but is only intended to point out the great danger to which the Israelites exposed themselves by encamping before Pi-hahiroth, since, probably at that time, a strong military garrison, later translocated to the neighbouring Daphne (*Herod.* ii. 30), was stationed there, and might have suddenly attacked the resting Hebrew army from the left, while the sea opposed them on the right. This supposition is, however, more ingenious than plausible. That Migdol is Mount Attaka, as Tischendorf and Kutscheit assert, is without any foundation. Niebuhr (*Descr. of Arabia*, p. 409) supposes it to have been near the modern Bir Suez, which is not at variance with the text.—Baal-Zephon, probably the town of Typhon, who was the evil genius, or the enemy of fertility, who came in the burning wind from the desert, to destroy the creations of Osiris in the valley of the Nile (see note on ix. 10). Baal-Zephon is therefore, Typhonia, or according to Forster, Heroopolis (where, as Egyptian mythology asserts, Typhon was killed by lightning), which is in Egyptian *Aouari*, from which the Greeks seem to have made *Heroo*, adding πόλις, *town*; and the whole region in the uncultivated desert-tracts between the Nile and the Red Sea is called, "the seat of Typhon."—Now, if we combine all these statements concerning Pi-hahiroth, Migdol, and Baal-Zephon, and keep in mind the direction of the *return* above pointed out, the conjecture, that *Kolsoum* was the place of encampment described in our verse, or the point of passage over the Red Sea, seems perfectly plausible. About its situation says Niebuhr (*Trav.* i. p. 218): "In ancient times, when the

ships were still enabled to come up higher in the Arabian Gulf, the town *Kolsoum*, so celebrated among Arabic writers, was situated near the place, where afterwards Suez was built. Although we see here nothing but large hills of ruins, without any relics which deserve our attention; still its name has been preserved till our time, for in Suez they are still called the ruins of *Kolsoum*." We know that there was, besides, another town *Kolsoum*, more than a degree south of Suez, at the port of the mountain of the same name. But this town is here perfectly out of the question, as it is decidedly too far to the south. For already have the Israelites *returned*, that is, they have proceeded northwards; and it is impossible to suppose, that the Israelitish army strayed under the prudent leadership of Moses, heedlessly so far to the south. But the former *Kolsoum* agrees entirely with the description of our text; for in the north, west, and south, it is surrounded by the desert, but in the east it borders on the Red Sea.—As this subject forms one of the most important and interesting points in the history of the deliverance of Israel, and as the defining of the situation of Pi-hahiroth includes at the same time the momentous question concerning the part of the Red Sea at which the Hebrew army effected the passage, we will examine here some remarks from *Kitto's History of Palestine* (i. p. 177), in which the opinion, entertained by many others, of a considerably more *southern* position of that town is thus explained by the author: "About the head of the Gulf of Suez a desert plain extends for ten or twelve miles to west and north of the city of that name. On the west this plain is bounded by the chain of Attaka, which comes down towards the sea in a north-easterly direction. Opposite Suez this chain is seen at a considerable distance, but, as we advance southward, the moun-

he ²will pursue after them; and I will be honoured through Pharaoh, and through all his army; that the

² *Engl. Vers.*—Shall.

tains rapidly approach the sea, and proportionately contract the breadth of the valley; and the chain terminates at the sea, and seems, in the distant view, to shut up the valley at Ras-el-Attaka, or Cape Attaka, twelve miles below Suez. But on approaching this point, ample room is found to pass beyond; and in passing beyond we find ourselves in a broad alluvial plain, forming the mouth of the valley of Bedea. This plain is on the other or southern side nearly shut up by the termination of another chain of these mountains, which extend between the Nile and the western shore of the Red Sea. Any further progress in this direction would be impossible to a large army, especially when encumbered with flocks and herds and with women, children, and baggage; and this in the manner, in which the rocks, the mountains, and the cliffs advance to the western shore. And, besides, any advance in this direction would be suicidal to a body desiring to escape from Egypt, as they would have the Red Sea between them and Arabia Proper, and would only get involved among the plains and valleys which separate the mountain-chains of Egyptian Arabia."—This is the decided opinion, at which the author has arrived after the fluctuating conjectures in the Pictorial Bible (pp. 168—170), from which we may, however, gather several arguments for the support of his opinion; and this will be at the same time the easiest way to refute it. Before all, we must at the very beginning emphatically protest against a supposition, which would at once stamp Moses as the most incapable and most infatuated of all military leaders. It has, as we have seen in our note on xiii. 17, always been his unshaken intention to lead the people into the Arabian desert towards Horeb; he was therefore obliged to take from Goshen the direction to south-east. Now we can well imagine, that in the unavoidable

haste of the journey, he proceeded too far to the *south*, so that the sea was between his hosts and Arabia; which compelled him to return *northwards*, in order to march round the head of the Gulf—which he no doubt would have done, if he had not, by the pursuing Egyptians, been compelled to a sudden passage through the sea (as the command in xiv. 15: "and he shall proceed *northwards*," sufficiently shows). But it is perfectly impossible to suppose, that Moses, having once taken the right route, should intentionally and wantonly, instead of passing round the head of the Gulf into the Sinaitic peninsula, proceed southwards, through a multitude of impassable mountains, and designedly occupy a position which must almost inevitably deliver the army into the hands of their Egyptian enemies. We respect the pious sense, in which that hypothesis originates; for that very infatuation, so obvious and so manifest, is represented as pre-destined, in order to afford God new opportunities for mighty wonders; but even according to that theory, the Hebrew army did not give itself blindly up to a miraculous guidance, but calculated the possibilities and advantages of the different routes; for it did not proceed beyond the valley of Bedea, because "any advance in this direction would be suicidal to a body desiring to escape from Egypt." In all human calculation, *every* advance to the south, in the west of the Red Sea, was every way equally *suicidal*. Further, even if we suppose, that the Israelites proceeded, on the command of Moses, six German miles to the south of Suez—for that is the distance to Bedea—this must have been accomplished in *one* day; and it is impossible for a large and much encumbered multitude to advance at so rapid a rate. And in general, the scientific interpretation must recur to miraculous expedients, only after all attempts at a rational explanation have failed.—

Egyptians may know that I *am* the Lord. And they did so.—5. And it was reported to the king of Egypt, that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said,

Further, the width of the Gulf in the south of Attaka, amounts, according to Robinson (i. 93), to three German miles; and it is impossible that so numerous a host should, in *one* night, advance such a distance; although we do not urge the circumstance, that at that point the sea is so deep, that it cannot well be dried up by a wind (ver. 21). Besides, the valley of Bedea is far too narrow and too small, to offer space for a camp to a multitude of about three millions of souls. Further, the Hebrew expression: "and they shall return," does not even admit an interpretation like that quoted above, according to which the Israelites would not have gone *back* the same way towards Egypt, on which they had proceeded before, but taken quite a *different* route to the south, without any plan or design. But in our explanation the command: "they shall return," retains its literal meaning.—The arguments for a more southern passage: that otherwise the Egyptians would have preferred to pass round the little way at the head of the Gulf in order to intercept the Israelites on the other, eastern coast; that in the north the sea has not water enough to drown the Egyptian army, and that it is not wide enough to hold at the same time the whole line of that army; all these, and similar arguments are of little importance, as the former nature and extent of the northern part of the Gulf of Suez, are so little known to us, and at all events, the changes which it has suffered, lead our conjectures about the situation of Pi-hahiroth, rather northwards than southwards.—The Arabian tradition mentions as the point of passage of the Israelites a great variety of names, which, however, are so little authentic, that Shaw remarks, the Bedouins point out to the travellers generally just that place, where they happen

to be asked, as the locality of any ancient event. And all those names deserve, therefore, no critical examination.—About the passage itself, we refer to vers. 21, 22. On a similar basis like the opinion above analyzed, is founded the following remark of Ebn Ezra on our verse: "In truth no man, however wise, ought to search after the deeds of the Lord, for all His works are profound; and the wisdom of man is like nought before Him. And I make this observation, because it appears, that God commanded the Israelites to return, in order by this stratagem to tempt Pharaoh to pursue them, and thus to bury him and his army in the sea. For the ways of the Lord are inscrutable."—*The wilderness hath shut them in*; that is, the mountains of the wilderness preclude their further march; or the pathless desert has so entangled them that they have lost the direction of their journey. Targ. Jonathan translates "the idol Typhon has shut them in from the side of the desert," which strange paraphrase, it is curious to observe, has been adopted by Mendelssohn. Philippson translates: "the desert has shut itself before them," and remarks, that the usual translation: "the desert hath shut them in," has no sense or meaning, since the Israelites did not go at all into the desert; but in this severe stricture he forgets, that it is not the *Arabian*, but the *Egyptian* desert, in which they seemed to have been hopelessly entangled.

4. *And I shall harden Pharaoh's heart.* After an interval of several days, during which the king gradually recovered from his panic and reflected on the enormity of the loss he had inflicted upon himself by dismissing so many thousand industrious labourers, his innate pride and obstinacy returned, his heart was hardened again, and the inclination of his mind was strengthened into a firm deter-

Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us? 6. And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him: 7. And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and ¹warriors in

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Captains.

mination by the report that the Hebrew army had made movements which seemed to indicate a perfect ignorance of the territory through which they had to journey, and a cessation of the special providence and guidance which their God had hitherto manifested in their favour. Thus Pharaoh's refractoriness proceeded entirely from the perversity of his own heart; the very circumstances and events which would have reformed a less depraved mind, proved to him as inducements for new acts of pride and disobedience. We can, therefore, not admit the interpretation of those who translate here, and in ver. 8, "I shall encourage Pharaoh's heart," to follow his evil propensity. By this rendering, the dogmatical explanation would be rather aggravated than facilitated, whilst its lexicographical correctness is questionable.—*And I will be honoured through Pharaoh and through all his host*, that is, as the Jewish interpreters aptly explain: By punishing the wicked, God manifests to the world His justice and power, and impresses upon the nations of the earth that His mercy protects the virtuous, and His indignation chastises the insolent and the haughty, so that such acts of just retribution teach the heathens that *He is the Lord* (compare Ez. xxxviii. 22, 23; Ps. lxxvi. 2, 4). This is a far higher ground than that taken by Cahen: "According to the Biblical or Oriental notions, revenge taken upon the enemies is a matter of pride and glory."

5. The three days after the departure of the Israelites had elapsed, and Pharaoh, informed by his scouts that far from performing the pretended sacrifice they seemingly strayed about without a certain aim, believed now that it was perfectly certain that the people had not left the country in order to wor-

ship God, but, in fact, to escape entirely, and he strongly repented of his fatal concessions, which, although slight in themselves, threatened to deprive him of a very useful class of subjects. For the permission which he granted to the Israelites to depart, was distinctly limited to a three days' leave for the purpose of offering sacrifices, but never extended to allow their total emigration; he had clearly pronounced, "Go, serve the Lord as you have said" (xii. 31); and therefore now, when the stratagem of the Hebrews was obvious, the heart of the king, more vividly susceptible to the faults of others than to its own wrongs, was "turned against the Israelites," whilst it was formerly, at least for a short time, inclined in their favour.

6. *And he made ready his chariot*, that is, Pharaoh ordered it to be done, not "he did so himself in the heat and passion of his revengefulness," as Rashi, following the rabbinical interpretation, remarks.

7. The use of chariots was common in Egypt from very remote periods; it is even, perhaps, one of the first countries where they were known; for Egypt was, on account of its numerous plains and the general flatness of the land, peculiarly adapted for them. A double sort of chariots was, in early times, in use: 1. The pleasure-and travelling-carriages, and the transport-wagons (Gen. xlv. 19, 21, 27), and 2. The battle or war-chariots, xv. 4, etc; 2 Chron. xii. 3; Jer. xlvii. 9). The former kind, it is difficult, at present, clearly to describe; but the greatest probability has the supposition, that they resembled a sort of vehicles which are still used in some parts of the Orient, and which are light covered carts, without springs, called Arabah. The travelling-carriages fell, later, more and more into disuse, as the whole land was so intersected with

every one of them. 8. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel went out

numerous canals, that it became unsuitable for horses and carriages (*Herod.* ii. 108); and, according to the most recent travellers, even now neither wagons nor carriages are seen in Egypt (*Mayr*, ii. 40). But of the battle-chariots the old monuments offer us numerous representations, from which we learn their construction and application with sufficient clearness. It is commonly a small box, mounted on two low wheels of six generally round spokes, of such small dimensions, that it allows to the one warrior, who occupies it, scarcely more than standing room. It is generally drawn by two horses adorned with rich trappings; a third ran often at their side to be in readiness should one become disabled. The warrior in full arms (with a bow and arrows, or a javelin and a kind of reaping-hook) stood erect in his car; the reins were fastened round his waist; and he thus governed the horses by the movements of his body; and even Egyptian officers of distinction and sons of kings managed their own cars, and sought a particular fame in excelling in that art. It is, however, not improbable that these chariots had often room for two warriors and, in the manner of the Homeric war-chariots, or those of the Romans (which contained the bellator and the auriga), were driven by a charioteer, whilst the warrior could, with greater safety and firmness, direct his whole attention to the combat. Still in later centuries the Egyptians remained so renowned for their battle-chariots, that the Israelites, from this reason, sought their alliance against the Assyrian and Chaldean invaders (2 Kings xviii. 24; Is. xxxi. 1; Ezek. xvii. 15).—That Egypt abounded in beautiful horses is well known (see on ix. 3); according to Diodorus Siculus the Egyptian kings before Sesostris had along the banks of the Nile, between Thebes and Memphis, two hundred stables, each of which contained a hundred horses, and

foreign kings enriched their studs with horses of Egyptian breed (1 Kings x. 28; 2 Chron. xiii. 3). But riding on horseback was, even many centuries later, not in use among the Egyptians; and neither the circumstance that profane writers ascribe that art to so old and genuinely an Egyptian deity as Osiris or his son Orus, nor that on ancient Egyptian paintings mounted figures are represented, prove such a custom at an earlier period; the accounts of the former are too indistinct and fabulous, and the monuments represent riders on horseback only among the enemies of the Egyptians, or among foreigners; and it is sufficient merely to mention the vague assertion of Wilkinson (*Manners* i. p. 289), who accounts for the omission of every notice of Egyptian cavalry on the monuments by supposing “that the artists intended to show how much more numerous the horsemen of the inimical nations were than of their own people.”

An organised and powerful cavalry of the Egyptian army is, therefore, in the times of Moses, out of the question. But the passage, Gen. xlix. 17, can by no consideration be adduced as a proof of the art of riding among the Egyptians, as has been done by Kitto, since it refers not to Egyptians, but to Hebrews, although then living in Egypt. For agricultural labours the horses were, according to unanimous testimonies, not used in Egypt.—As, therefore, the horses were chiefly applied for the purposes of war, especially for battle-chariots, the decay of their breeding is naturally accountable by the gradual decay of the martial spirit and of the military organization of the Egyptians. — The distinction between the “chariots of Egypt” and “the selected chariots,” justifies us in supposing, that the former belonged to the *guard of the king*. The existence of such a privileged body is

with a high hand. 9. But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the 'chariot-horses of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Horses and chariots.

certain, not only from testimonies of Herodotus (ii. 168), but from frequent representations on Egyptian monuments (*Rosellini*, II., iii. p. 201). They were distinguished by their arms and garments, and enjoyed peculiar privileges besides those which were common to the warrior caste. They were especially important and influential in later times, under the dynasty of the Ptolemies; they possessed the royal confidence in a high degree, and were used to the most momentous offices and commissions, especially the "chief of the guards." The number, "six hundred chariots," must appear very moderate, and therefore trustworthy, if we consider that Diodorus of Sicily (i. 54), describes the military power of Sesostrius consisting of 600,000 men infantry, 24,000 riders, and 27,000 battle-chariots.

8. *And the children of Israel went out with a high hand*, that is, openly, confidently and joyfully (see Numbers xxxiii. 3, where it is added, by way of explanation "before the eyes of all Egypt"), or, as Mendelssohn says: "they made themselves banners and military standards, and went out cheerfully and singing and playing on cymbals and lyres, like men who are for ever free from thralldom, not as slaves who intend to return to the old yoke." The joyfulness and confidence of the Israelites refers to the exact time of the exodus; for, but a short time later, when the approaching Egyptians became visible (verse 10), despondency and apprehension prevailed through their hosts.

9. It cannot appear surprising, that Pharaoh was, in such a little interval, enabled to pursue the Israelites with so numerous an army, as it is well known that the warriors formed the second hereditary caste of Egypt, which was so influential that the kings were generally taken from it, and that it was alone, except the priests, allowed to acquire

landed property from the principle that the occupiers of the soil are most interested in the safety of the country. Every soldier received twelve auroræ of land, free from all charge and tribute (the aurora was a square measure, containing 10,000 cubits). Besides, no civil authority had the power of arresting and imprisoning a soldier for debt (*Diod.* i. 79). Herodotus (ii. 164—168) relates that they were divided into two classes; the Hermotybies and the Calasiries, who were originally, no doubt, different tribes. Both were stationed in different nomes or districts, but almost exclusively in Lower Egypt; four-and-a-half nomes were, within the Delta, occupied by the Hermotybies, and eleven others by the Calasiries, whilst each of these classes had but one district in Middle and Upper Egypt, namely, Chemmis and Thebes. And if, as we have no reason to doubt, this distribution of the warriors was already made in ante-Mosaic times on account of the frequent invasions from Asia, the promptness with which the Egyptian army could be called out in Lower Egypt, is the easier accounted for. The Hermotybies consisted, in the time of their greatest strength, of 160,000 men; the Calasiries of 250,000. They were not allowed to learn trades, which pursuits they were accustomed to consider as undignified and unmanly, but were obliged to devote themselves exclusively to their military calling. However, as they were landed proprietors, it is very probable that, in times of peace, they engaged besides in sports of the field, and gymnastic exercises, in the occupations of agriculture, which promote the physical strength and foster habits of activity and temperance; although, according to an account of Diodorus, they were accustomed to let out their lands to husbandmen. Annually 1000 Hermotybies and Calasiries had to serve as a guard to the king; and they

sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, before Baal-Zephon. 10. And when Pharaoh approached, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were much afraid; and the children of Israel cried to the Lord. 11. And they said to Moses, Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore hast thou done

received, during this time, an additional allowance of meat, bread, and wine. After the lapse of one year they were relieved by others; and the neglect of this practice caused the emigration of a large portion of the warriors to Ethiopia (*Herod. ii. 30*). It appears from our note on verse 7, that the Egyptian army included well-exercised chariot-warriors, and an excellent infantry, but no considerable cavalry, at least not in earlier times. The interpretations, which would find a cavalry mentioned in our text, are incorrect; the infantry is mentioned in verse 9. Thus the remark of Hengstenberg that, under the circumstances of a quick and sudden pursuit, the infantry could here not be applied, is unfounded.—It would not be unimportant with regard to the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, to know the day on which Pharaoh overtook the encamping Israelites. The sacred text offers no clue on this point; tradition fixes the day upon the 21st of Nisan, which statement Michaelis and others have tried to support, and to make plausible, by the following computation:—On the 15th day of Nisan the Israelites arrived in Succoth (*xii. 37*); on the 16th in Etham (*xiii. 20*; from Raamses to Etham is a distance of about nine German miles); on the 17th they rested in Etham; on the 18th they encamped in Pi-hahiroth (*xiv. 2*); on the 19th, about noon, Pharaoh marched out to pursue the Israelites, and he overtook them on the 20th, in the evening; so that the transit of the Israelites took place in the night of the 21st of Nisan. In this specification we find only this one point improbable, that the Israelites should have rested on the 17th of Nisan, under

the greatest dangers; however, if we suppose, instead of this, that they on that day erroneously continued their way from Etham to the south, so that, in order not to be shut out from Arabia by the Gulf of Suez, they were compelled to return, and to encamp in Pi-hahiroth, we have a new illustration of our opinion concerning the situation of Pi-hahiroth and the signification of “they shall return,” in verse 2. Targum Jonathan inserts here a rather long addition describing the Israelites occupied in gathering from the sea-shore precious stones and jewels, which had belonged to the drowned Egyptians.

10. When the Israelites saw the approach of the Egyptian army, *they were very much afraid*. Ebn Ezra aptly remarks on ver. 13: “It is very surprising that such a large army, consisting of 600,000 men, should be so terrified by an approaching enemy, and that they did not fight for their own lives and for their wives and children. But our astonishment ceases if we consider that the Egyptians had been the lords of the Hebrews, and that that generation, which had just departed from Egypt, had learned from their youth to respect the Egyptians as their superiors, and patiently to endure all insults which they inflicted upon them; thus had their minds become depressed and servile, and how could they now fight against their masters? Besides, the Israelites were weak and not experienced in the practices of war. They could not even combat against the Canaanitish tribes till the following generation had grown up, which had not sighed under the foreign servitude, and which was bolder and more high-spirited.” This idea of Ebn Ezra has been still further

thus to us, to lead us forth out of Egypt? 12. *Is* not this the word that we spoke to thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For *it 'is* better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness. 13. And Moses said to the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord,

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Had been.

developed by Mendelssohn. Besides, the Hebrews were, undoubtedly, not provided with battle-chariots, and, in general, not so well equipped as the Egyptians. But experience in the use of arms it was almost impossible for the Hebrews to possess, as in Egypt those only who belonged to the warrior caste, were permitted to wear arms. It may be a very wise and beneficial law, which forbids to wear arms in the streets; but it is scarcely a proof of so exalted a degree of civilisation and political order, as Wilkinson finds in that prohibition (*Manners*, i. pp. 347, 402, *et seq.*). A state may be perfectly despotic, the personal liberty of the citizens may be completely fettered, and such a law might yet be enforced, as is, indeed, even at the present day, in many absolute and autocratic governments. Despotism has, in fact, the very greatest interest in making the *citizens* forget the use of arms.—*And the children of Israel cried to the Lord*, that is, partly in prayer, partly in agitation and murmuring. Certainly those who are in this verse represented as *crying*, are the same who, in the following, assail Moses with reproaches; so that the translation of Targum Jonathan “and the wicked of that generation said to Moses,” is quite arbitrary. In ver. 13 and 14, the same paraphrast divides even the Israelites into four classes: those who wish to return to Egypt, those who are eager to fight against the Egyptians, etc.

12. Although the text does not mention similar remonstrances of the Israelites before the exodus, the preceding narrative offers more than one allusion to the resistance which the

despondency and the disbelief of the Israelites opposed to his plans, as in vi. 9: “They did not listen to Moses;” or, v. 21: “The Lord may look upon you and judge.” As faint reminiscences, and fluctuating traditions from past centuries, were the only bonds by which the vast numbers of the Israelites were feebly connected; as, further, the tyrannical measures of the Pharaohs had perfectly attained their aim in making the Israelites indifferent, and deadened to all higher interests—for this large population did not even attempt a revolt against their oppressors—and as political independence was an idea which they had neither inherited from their ancestors, nor had themselves practically acquired: the miraculous interposition of God, which, working through the agency of Moses, had effected their release, had only silenced, not extirpated their doubts and their reluctance; and now, when they saw themselves in an endless, dreary and trackless wilderness, in which they must, even under the most favourable circumstances, expect all the horrors of famine, and when, to complete their consternation, they beheld their mortal enemies wrathfully follow behind them, and the foaming sea wildly rage before them: was it not natural that the people, forgetting a feeling of honour which had as yet taken no root in their minds, wished longingly to return to the old yoke of servitude, to the miseries and humiliations to which long habit had almost reconciled them, and in which their daily wants were, at least, tolerably provided for?

13, 14. Moses calms the desponding Israelites; but still without severity or

which He will show to you to day: ¹for as you have seen the Egyptians to-day, you shall see them again no more for ever. 14. The Lord will fight for you, and you shall keep yourselves quiet.

15. And the Lord said to Moses, Wherefore criest thou to me? Speak to the children of Israel, that they go forward: 16. And lift thou up thy ²staff, and stretch out thy hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through ³the sea. 17. And I, behold, I shall harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will follow them: and I will be honoured through

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—For the Egyptians, whom you have seen to-day, etc.

² Rod.

³ The midst of the sea.

censure: they must, in this apparently desperate situation, not rely upon their own strength, but upon the help of God, who would combat for them, without the least co-operation on their part.—*For as you see the Egyptians to-day, you shall see them again no more for ever.* Against the usual translation (“The Egyptians, whom you have seen to-day, you shall see them again no more”) may be urged, besides other arguments, that such idea would militate against history and against the spirit of the Mosaic legislation: for the connection of the Israelites with the Egyptians was, in later times also, especially in the epoch of the Hebrew monarchy, vividly entertained; and Moses facilitated the admission of the Egyptians into the Hebrew community by special precepts (see note on xxii. 20). Therefore, the assertion of Philippon: “that this was the complete act of separation between the tyrannical Egyptians and the enthralled Israelites, and thus their connection was entirely and for ever dissolved,” is but partially true.—But on the other hand, it is perfectly correct, that the Israelites saw the Egyptians no more so as they beheld them on that day; by a special providence in favour of the Israelites, the flower of their army was destroyed, and they were deeply humiliated before all the nations of the earth.—*And you shall be quiet*, which very emphatical expression can signify either,

with respect to ver. 10: you shall desist from your clamouring and mourning; or more probably: you may quietly and confidently trust in the assistance of God, who will fight your combats for you.

15—18. God repeats to Moses the promise of a happy deliverance from the pursuing Egyptians (ver. 4), now stating the manner of this rescue, that He will divide the sea before the Israelites, and lead them as through dry land, whilst He would immerse the whole Egyptian army in its depths.—*And the Lord said to Moses, Wherefore criest thou to me?* which is by Targum Onkelos thus incorrectly rendered: “I have heard thy prayer”; and Rashi infers from it, that Moses, although consoling and encouraging the Israelites, yet sought internal fortitude by prayer, which the Syriac version really adds. Natural and probable as is this opinion, it is questioned by Ebn Ezra, who believes, that Moses is here named only as the representative of the people of Israel; which would be plausible only on the supposition that the Israelites also invoked God’s assistance.—*That they go forward*, “to the coast of the sea,” says Ebn Ezra; but it is unquestionably more probable, that Moses, as a cautious leader, in this critical moment, proceeded further northwards, where the passage was much easier and safer, even in the case that they should not succeed to pass round the head of the Gulf (see on xiv. 1—3).—

Pharaoh, and through all his host, through his chariots, and through his horsemen. 18. And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the Lord, when I have been honoured through Pharaoh, through his chariots, and through his horsemen. 19. And the angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, ⁴withdrew, and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud withdrew from before their face, and stood behind them: 20. And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud of darkness *to them*, but it gave light by night *to these*: so that the one came not near the other all the

⁴ *Engl. Vers.*—Removed.

Moses is commanded "to lift up the staff, and to stretch out his hand over the sea," analogous to similar symbolical acts performed at the Egyptian plagues (compare note on ix. 10). For it was not the staff which divided the sea; but, according to ver. 21, God kept back the waters by a strong east-wind; although this began to blow the moment when Moses lifted up his staff.—*Through the sea*, not exactly through *the midst* of the sea, but they crossed it at that very point, on which they happened to be at the beginning of the evening.

19, 20. In order to enable the Israelites to effect the passage over the Red Sea during the night, in safety and without danger of being attacked or pressed on by the Egyptians, both armies were divided by the pillar of cloud, which passed between them, so that they did not touch each other during the night; and in order to enhance the protection of the one, and the confusion of the other, the former were surrounded by shining light, the latter by deep darkness. Now those, who suppose that the pillar of cloud and that of fire were two distinct columns, follow the opinion of Rashbam and of others, that the pillar of fire spread light before the army of the Israelites as usually in all nights, whilst the pillar of cloud stood behind them, and before the Egyptians, causing darkness to the latter. But those, who believe that both were but

one and the same pillar, accede to the opinion of Targum Jonathan, that it divided itself into a bright and dark half, the former of which shone cheerfully upon the path of the Israelites, whilst the latter benighted the ranks of the Egyptians; or, as Maurer explains, it appeared dark to the Egyptians, but bright to the Israelites; so also Vulgate, Luther, and others.—This is the general clear sense of these verses, which several ancient translators render rather obscurely and confusedly.—But certainly the text narrates a miraculous fact, and it is futile to explain it naturally, as, for instance, Vater has attempted to do, in the following manner: "We can represent to ourselves the circumstance, so that the vapour, which might easily have been increased by lighting still more combustibles, was, by the strong wind, driven upon the Egyptians, whilst the Israelites had the flame before them; and that the former beheld towards the morning the red reflex of the flame breaking through the vapour; and believed it in their consternation to be a sign of the presence of God." The precarious character of such conjectures is self-evident.—As God or His angel was in the cloud (see xiii. 21, 22), the one recedes, when the other goes back; and therefore the phrases: "the angel of God withdrew," and "the pillar of cloud withdrew" (in ver. 19) appear to be synonymous.

night. 21. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east-wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and

21, 22. In these two verses the memorable and miraculous passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea is related in simple and clear words, and yet not without poetical grace. As in all the wonders of Egypt (see p. 88), this also, the greatest of all (the division of the Red Sea), is based upon a natural cause, and in this the boundless power of God, who, by an insignificant change, knows how to convert the natural and common course of things into extraordinary and marvellous events, is sublimely manifest. And, in this sense, Rashbam observes: "God acted in the usual way, for the wind dries up and coagulates the rivers;" and Ebn Ezra mentions, with particular stress, that the wind did not cease to blow during the *whole* night, even not at the time of the passage itself. It is a *strong east-wind*, which produces the drying-up of the sea, and "divides the waters;" for storms work at all times similar effects, although in an infinitely more limited degree; and the prophet Hosea (xiii. 15) says, with a similar metaphor: "an east-wind shall come, the wind of the Lord (that is, a strong wind) and his spring shall cease to flow, and his fountain shall be dried up." The Hebrew term, however, here used is not necessarily, the *east-wind*, which would just have driven the waves into the faces of the Israelites, who stood at the western coast, but only a *strong, vehement* wind, from whatever part it may blow. The Septuagint translates here, as in x. 13 (which see), *south-wind*, and the Vulgate, a burning wind, which dried up the sea by heat. But both versions are against our text. In fact, no individual wind applies exactly to the description of the text; for the sea made a dry path from west to east, and from *both sides* of it, to the right and to the left, the waters formed a wall, which sense is still more poetically ex-

pressed in xv. 8: "the floods stood upright like a *mound*." In these phrases the word *wall* is not exactly intended to convey the idea of *protection* (as Michaelis believes), but only of hardness and solidity, into which the fluid was converted. More clearly than in our text, the similar miracle of the passage of the Jordan is related in Joshua iii. 13, 16, where also the expression *wall*, is used of the erect floods. Clericus and others take the words *wall* and *mound* quite figuratively, so that they signify merely, that the waters receded and formed low fords. But those expressions cannot possibly stand, by way of metaphor, for a thing which has not the remotest internal connection with them; they are evidently meant to represent a miraculous stand-still of the waves on both sides of the marching Israelites; which idea is expressly urged in Psalm lxxviii. 13, as a great wonder, with the same word; whereas that explanation would, contrary to the intention of the author, disavow the miracle. We have already, in our notes on verses 1—3, refuted the conjecture, that the point of passage was as far to the south as Bedea, and have declared ourselves in favour of Kolsoum, which was situated near the present Suez, and with which both the sacred text and the circumstances of the event harmonise. On this point the sea is only 757 double paces broad; and the Hebrew army could well journey this distance within six or seven hours, from the evening to the morning watch; and it is unnecessary to recur, as Eichhorn, Rosenmüller, and others do, to the conjecture that a large portion of the people had already reached the eastern coast of the Gulf before that time; a supposition quite untenable, and in no way justified by our text. Further, after the testimony of Niebuhr (Descr. of Arabia, p. 412), the bed of the sea is in this part sandy, and, therefore, easily

the waters were divided. 22. And the children of Israel went 'through the sea upon the dry *ground*: and the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Into the midst of the sea.

passable, and not slimy or covered with corals, which are very numerous in the southern part. Besides, the water is here free from sea-weeds, which, in more southern sections, considerably aggravate the passage, and render a *quick* march impossible.

The extraordinary narrowness of the Gulf of Suez, which appears here like a river, has been noticed both by ancient and modern geographers, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, Niebuhr and others. The sea has, in fact, on this point been crossed by others also, although with great danger; so by Christopher Furer and Jacob Beyer, from Nürnberg, in November, 1565; by Niebuhr, on horseback, in September, 1762, whilst Arabs accompanied him on foot; by Napoleon, in the year 1798, also on horseback, but who narrowly escaped; and by several others. In general, passages over the sea, even with armies, are not without parallel; thus narrates Strabo (xiv. 2. § 9) concerning Alexander the Great: "About Phaselis is that narrow passage by the sea-side through which Alexander led his army. For Mount Klimax, which adjoins to the Pamphylian coast, leaves, near the shore, a narrow passage, which, in calm weather, is bare, so as to be passable by travellers, but which is quite covered with water when the sea overflows. Now then, the ascent by the mountain is very circuitous and laborious; Alexander arrived there in a stormy season, but, as he mostly relied upon his good fortune, he commenced the march before the sea had retired, and his soldiers were obliged to journey a whole day through the water, which reached to the navel." This fact, which Alexander himself describes in his letters as plain and natural, has, by later writers, as Arrian, Appian, Menander and others, been drawn into the sphere of the miraculous, and represented as an extraordinary occurrence.

To that fact Josephus also alludes, in a passage which is, besides, remarkable in other respects. He writes, in his *Antiq.* II. xvi. 5: "As for myself, I have delivered every part of this history as I found it in the sacred books; nor let any one wonder at the strangeness of the narration, if a way was discovered, even through the sea, by those men of ancient times, who were free from wickedness, whether it happened by the will of God, or whether it happened of its own accord, since, for the sake of those who accompanied Alexander, king of Macedonia, who yet lived, comparatively, but a little while ago, the Pamphylian Sea retired, and afforded them a passage through itself, when they had no other way to go, I mean, when it was the will of God to destroy the monarchy of the Persians; and this is confessed to be true by all who have written about the actions of Alexander. But, as to these events, let every one determine as he pleases." Further, Livy (xxvi. 45) narrates, about Scipio Africanus: "When he learnt that the ebb was approaching, and that he could, from the sea-side, easily reach the walls (of Carthago Nova), he led his troops thither. It was about the middle of the day, and, besides the ebb, a heavy north-wind arose, and the sea became so low that the water reached, at some places, only to their navels, at others, scarcely to their knees. Scipio represented this circumstance, which he had discovered by attention and reflection, as a miracle, and ascribed it to the gods, who, in order to prepare a passage for the Romans, had ordered the sea to retire, and opened paths never before trodden by human feet; he, therefore, commanded his troops to follow Neptune as the guide of their way, and to proceed to the walls through the midst of the low water." Dr. E. D. Clarke (*Travels*, i. p. 324) writes: "A remarkable pheno-

waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. 23. And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them into the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. 24. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked upon the host of the

menon occurs in the Sea of Azof during violent east-winds: the sea retires, in so singular a manner, that the people of Tanganrog are able to effect a passage upon dry land to the opposite coast, a distance of twenty versts, equal to fourteen miles; but when the wind changes, and this it sometimes does very suddenly, the waters return with such rapidity to their wonted bed that many lives are lost. The depth here is five fathoms." See also Plutarch, in the Life of Lucullus, cap. 24, about his passage over the Euphrates, on which the natives of the country looked with astonishment as upon a miracle.—However, in spite of all these analogies, we cannot accede to the usual supposition, which has, since many centuries, been zealously advocated, that Moses also availed himself of the *ebb* to lead the Israelites over the Red Sea; for, it is asserted, that his long sojourn in those regions must have made him acquainted with the regularly returning tides; and thus the history of the passage would be deprived of every miraculous element, and would simply become a natural event. But, although both ancient and modern writers confirm the considerable ebbs at the Red Sea, the following facts militate against such conjecture: 1st. The holy text makes no allusion whatever to ebb or flood; on the contrary, the description of the event "that the waters of the sea stood like a wall to the right and to the left," utterly excludes such interpretation; 2nd, According to the *spirit* of our narrative, evidently no natural event is related, but an extraordinary miracle, to which the later Hebrew historians, poets and prophets, incessantly refer, as the greatest act of God's special providence in favour of Israel, and it would require nothing less than a contortion of the whole Bibli-

cal literature if it were attempted to argue away that miracle (compare Exod. xv. 14—19; Ps. lxxvi. 6; lxxvii. 17; lxxviii. 13; cvi. 9; cxiv. 3; Josh. iv. 23, etc). 3rd. Even the Egyptians acknowledge (ver. 25) the miraculous character of this event; 4th. The ebb lasts only so short time that the whole army would not safely have reached the opposite coast, without being overtaken by the returning flood, and the supposition of Michaelis, that a *double ebb* took place just in that night, as that on the Dutch coast, in June 1672, would imply quite as great a miracle as that which it is intended to remove. Then, to sum up this subject, although a passage through the Red Sea in the neighbourhood of Kolsoum, in a natural way, is not quite impossible, and has, indeed, several times been effected in later periods; it was yet, according to the holy text, executed under so extraordinary circumstances that the literal sense of our narrative shows, unmistakably, that it is intended to describe here a miracle. Profane writers also mention the drying out of the sea, and the transit of the Israelites; thus, according to Diodor. (iii. 39), the Ichthyophagi, a poor and not very numerous tribe in the east of the Gulf of Suez, have preserved the tradition, that "by a great ebb once the whole Gulf became dry, the waters gathered on the opposite side, so that the bottom was visible; but then a violent flood filled up the bed again." On the account of Artapanus, see in the Introduction, § 3. iv.

23. The Egyptians, either seeing the dry path of the sea, or (as Abarbanel believes) surrounded by darkness (ver. 20), not perceiving at all that the Israelites effected their passage over the dry bed of the waves, followed them in blind fury; in the former case, hoping to share the miracle wrought in favour of the Israelites;

Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and ¹confounded the host of the Egyptians; 25. And ²made glide out their chariot-wheels, ³and led them on with difficulty; so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from before

Engl. Vers.—Troubled.

² Took off.

³ That they drave them heavily.

in the other alternative, not even aware of the imminent danger, into which they madly plunged; and thus all their horses, chariots, and warriors ran into their destruction.

24. *And it came to pass in the morning watch.* Like all nations which calculate after the course of the moon (as the Arabians, Greeks, Gauls, and others), the Hebrews reckoned the civil day from sunset to sunset. The division of the natural day into twelve hours, which were in the different seasons of unequal length (as among the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans), seems to have been adopted by the Israelites not earlier than in the time of the exile, when they followed their Babylonian masters (Herod. ii. 109). The hours were counted from sunrise; the first corresponded with our sixth in the morning; the sixth to our twelfth. The longest day in Palestine lasts fourteen hours and twelve minutes; the shortest, nine hours forty-eight minutes. The night was divided into "watches," that is, into sections after the lapse of which the watch was relieved. Before the exile three such watches were in use among the Hebrews: 1. the first watch of the night, from about six to ten in the evening (Lament. ii. 19); 2. the middle watch, from ten to two o'clock in the night (Judg. vii. 19); and 3. the morning watch, from about two to six in the morning, or to the morning-dawn (here and in 1 Sam. xi. 11); and as the exodus of the Israelites took place at the beginning of April (see note on xii. 2), sunrise was about six o'clock in the morning.—But later, in the time of Christ, the Israelites had, after the custom of the Romans, four watches of about three hours each.—*And the Lord looked upon the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud.* God cast a glance of

indignation on the pursuing refractory idolators, and He thus *confounded* them.

—Similar metaphors derived from the "wrathful eye" of the Lord occur also in Amos ix. 4; Ps. civ. 32, etc. Our text describes merely the sudden consternation of the Egyptians, and points to God as the author of this horror, without in the least alluding to the means, by which that unexpected panic was produced. Tradition believes thunder and lightning, together with earthquake and torrents of rain to have been the cause of the confusion; and already in the Psalms (lxxvii. 18, 19) the event is thus represented: "The clouds poured out water; the skies sent out a sound; Thy arrows also were darted. The voice of Thy thunder was in the whirlwind; the lightnings illumined the world; the earth trembled and shook," and similarly Targ. Jonathan and Jerusalem, which opinion is also followed by Ebn Ezra, Rashi, Rashbam, and others, and even by modern interpreters; and Josephus also (Antiq. II. xvi. 3) writes: "Showers of rain came down from the sky, and dreadful thunders and lightning, with flashes of fire; thunder-bolts also were darted upon them; nor was there anything which used to be sent by God upon men, as indications of His wrath, which did not happen at this time."—We repeat, that our text offers no hint concerning these or similar phenomena.—God, "who was in the pillar of fire and of cloud," confounded the Egyptian army.

25. *And He made their chariot-wheels glide out and led them on with difficulty.* Many different explanations of these words have been proposed; but if we follow the construction and context without artificial efforts, we arrive simply at the following sense: God brought confusion over the Egyptians,

Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.—26. And the Lord said to Moses, Stretch out thy hand over the sea, that the waters may ¹return upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. 27. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to ²its usual flood towards the morning; and

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Come again.

² To his strength when the morning appeared.

for, eager as they were to pursue the Israelites, their chariots could not move on the slippery bottom of the sea, as if by higher interposition; they glided incessantly out or back; and thus the Egyptian chariot-army went but slowly and *heavily* on, whilst the Israelites, mostly on foot, reached the opposite coast with rapid steps.—The translation almost generally adopted is: “and He *took off* their chariot wheels”; thus Onkelos, Ebn Ezra, Rashi (who ascribes these destructive effects to the lightning, which struck also the bodies of the warriors), Luther, Mendelssohn, and others. But if the wheels of the chariots were *broken off*, God did not lead them on *with difficulty* or slowly, but the chariots would not have moved on at all; at least, the Egyptians would have at once and entirely abandoned the war-chariots without wheels, as perfectly unfit either for pursuit or combat.—The Septuagint translates: “and he tied up the axles of their chariots, and led them on with force,” which rendering is both arbitrary and ungrammatical. Into a similar mistake, besides others, the English Version also has fallen, translating with a change of the subjects: “so that *they* drove *them* heavily.”—Certainly, the general sense of the words, “and He *tied up* the wheels,” if taken figuratively for, “He arrested them,” is on the whole correct. See the larger edition.

26. After all the Israelites had reached the opposite shore, God commanded Moses to stretch out his hand, when all the waves, which had hitherto stood like a wall, firm and immovable, at both sides of the traversing Israelites, would *return*

into their wonted bed, and devour the Egyptian chariots and their warriors in one common grave.

27. *And the Egyptians fled against it.* For when they saw that the floods were approaching, they turned round, and thus hastened towards the waters; but they were overtaken by the waves, before they could gain the Egyptian coast.

28. And the waters returned and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, *together with* all the host of Pharaoh. That this is the only admissible translation has been grammatically proved in our Hebrew edition. For we are not permitted to suppose, that only the Egyptian *chariots* pursued the Israelites in the sea, whilst the infantry (ver. 9) remained behind; so that the former alone were devoured by the waves. It is true that both in this and in the following chapter, and in most other parts generally, the destruction of the chariots and its warriors is chiefly alluded to (ver. 26; xv. 4, 19, 21, etc); so that this particular stress would, perhaps, justify that conclusion. But it is evidently the intention of the sacred historian, to describe the total annihilation of the whole military force of the Egyptians, and he probably mentions the Egyptian war-chariots and horses with particular emphasis, only because these formed the chief pride and strength of the Egyptian army, and because these required a greater depth of the waves to drown them. But still more decidedly must we reject the opinion of Wilkinson (Manners i. p. 54), that “there is no authority in the writings of Moses for supposing that *Pharaoh* was drowned

the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the sea. 28. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen,³ together with all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. 29. But the children of Israel⁴ had walked upon dry *land* through the sea; and

³ *Engl. Vers.—And.*

⁴ Walked.

in the Red Sea." There is the strongest possible authority for this supposition. The whole plan of pursuing the Israelites originated in Pharaoh (vers. 3, 5), who strongly blamed himself for his rash concessions; he took his own chariot and set out at the head of his whole army (vers. 6, 7), and followed the Hebrews; then God promised to glorify Himself "*through Pharaoh and all his hosts*" (ver. 17), which is emphatically repeated in ver. 18. They, the Egyptian army, led by Pharaoh, follow the Israelites into the sea and are drowned; "there remained *not one of them*." We believe this is too clear to be mistaken; and if Wilkinson maintains, that in the song of Moses no mention is made of the king's death, he has overlooked xv. 9, which clearly points back to xiv. 2: "The enemy said, I will pursue." This is evidently Pharaoh, and none else; and the same "enemy" who said this, was covered by the waves (xv. 10). Further, the authority of Psalm cxxvi. 15, is more conclusive than Wilkinson believes, if considered from the Hebrew text, which says distinctly, "He (God) *drove Pharaoh and his host into the Red Sea*" (the translation of the Authorised Version "overthrew" is certainly too indistinct; and the same verb is used in our text, ver. 27, originally to *shake*, to throw down). In fact, the retaliation of divine justice would have been very imperfect, had it not included him who was the source and the author of the miseries of the Israelites, against whom the ten plagues were chiefly directed, and who had by his obstinacy plunged into endless calamities his unfortunate subjects, who were themselves less unwilling to obey the command of God (see x. 7). It may

be true, that "whenever any fact is mentioned in the Bible history we do not discover anything on the monuments which tends to contradict it"; but it is most precarious to form Biblical conjectures on so uncertain a basis as hieroglyphical inscriptions; and Egyptian history is still too much disputed, even in its fundamental outlines and its very framework, to be used as an authority equal to that of the sacred text. Wilkinson's results must, in this respect, be viewed with the greater precaution, as he follows the questionable opinion of those, who count but 430 years from the immigration of Abraham into Canaan to the exodus of his descendants from Egypt, and places this latter event into the fourth year of the reign of Thotmes III. (see Introduction, §§ 1, 2).

29. *But the children of Israel had walked upon dry land through the sea*, etc. As the same sentence occurs already, almost with the same words, above in ver. 22, Rashbam proposes to take the verb as pluperfect: "But the children of Israel had walked," etc; an explanation equally favoured by grammar and the context. But this sentence is repeated, in order once more strongly to contrast the rescue of the Israelites with the destruction of the Egyptians. However, Ebn Ezra finds in those words, combined with xv. 8, 10, 19, the following sense: "When Pharaoh perished with his army in the returning floods, all the Israelites had not yet crossed the sea; a new wonder was necessary; and it happened, that at the same time a strong wind dried up that part of the Gulf where the Israelites were passing, whilst another wind from the opposite direction blew the waves, which had just

the waters *had been* a wall to them on their right hand, and on their left. 30. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore. 31. And Israel saw that great ¹might which the Lord ²had shown against the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed in the Lord, and in His servant Moses.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Work.

² Did upon the Egyptians.

been solid like a wall, upon Pharaoh and his army." It is scarcely necessary to mention, that this conjecture is no way borne out by the holy text.—The same commentator raises here also the question, how it was feasible, that more than two millions of people could cross the sea in one night; and attempts a solution by the remark, that the hosts of the Israelites divided themselves into several sections, which effected the passage one at the side of the other along the Gulf; quoting a rabbinical remark, according to which the Israelites made the transit over the sea in a semicircular line, and met again in the desert of Shur on the eastern coast of the Gulf.

30. Now only were the Israelites completely and for ever rescued from the tyranny of the Egyptians, "and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore;" for the carcases of the Egyptians had been driven to the western shore. Josephus (*Antiq.* II. xvi. 6) adds the following circumstance: "On the next day Moses gathered together the weapons of the Egyptians, which were brought to the camp of the Hebrews by the current of the sea, and the force of the winds assisting it; and he conjectured that this also happened by divine Providence, that they might not be destitute of weapons."

31. *And the people feared the Lord,*

and believed in the Lord and in His servant Moses. They feared God on account of His severe justice, which condemns, and His omnipotence, which chastises, every obstinacy; and they believed in Him, relying on His paternal care in the sterile, dreary desert, because He had hitherto so lovingly and so miraculously guided them; but they believed now in Moses also as the obvious messenger or servant of God, in whose name, and under whose direction he undertakes all his schemes. Only with this awful miracle, which destroyed the flower of the Egyptian youth, Israel's redemption was completed; the first and principal condition of their organization into an independent community was realized; Moses could now, without impediment, lead his nation to the place where it was to receive the divine revelation, and then, after such internal preparation, determine on the measures best calculated to advance his ulterior aim, the immigration into, and the conquest of, Canaan. But, before proceeding with any new plan, his pious mind feels that a holy debt is first to be paid, a debt of praise and gratitude to the Lord of Hosts, for the miraculous rescue, and His fatherly guidance; and Moses acquits himself of this duty in a manner worthy alike of his brilliant genius and of his deep and enthusiastic piety.

CHAPTER XV.

SUMMARY.—Hymn of praise of the Israelites after the successful passage over the Red Sea (ver. 1—21). They proceed farther, in a south-easterly direction, to Marah, where they break out into open murmuring on account of the bitterness of the water. Moses makes it, however, potable, by throwing into it,

on the command of God, the wood of a certain tree. He avails himself of this miraculous event to exhort the people anew to obedience and submission to the divine guidance (ver. 22—26). From Marah they journey to Elim, where they encamp at the side of refreshing fountains, and under shady palm-trees (ver. 27).

THE HYMN OF MOSES.—VER. 1—19.

PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE following song, the interpretation of which we approach with a feeling of reverence and veneration, is as sublime and vigorous in its contents as it is masterly and perfect in its form; it has not only served as a model for all later hymns of victory in sacred lore, but it has scarcely been equalled by any production of a similar class in any other literature. But the richer the contents are, and the more finished the form, the nearer lies the temptation artificially to divide and subdivide the one, and violently to force the other into metrical laws, contrary to the simplicity of its structure. And great is the number of interpreters who have gone astray in either direction; they have indulged in logical niceties, and linguistic subtleties, which must necessarily destroy both the sublimity and the grace of this immortal lay. The inspired poet, powerfully moved by the mighty impulse of extraordinary events, surrounded by a people miraculously delivered from an all but certain ruin, and beholding the corpses of the revengeful foes heaped up on the opposite coast, is carried away to a glowing effusion of gratitude, of rapture, and of hope, an effusion in which neither his mind heeds the fetters of pedantic logical connection, nor his imagination the restraints of prosodical rules: it is an ode of the highest lyrical flight, the result of the enthusiasm of the moment, the production of a lofty genius and an overflowing heart. Nobody will, in such a poem, expect a prosaical and regular disposition, a strictly systematical arrangement of ideas, or a rigid observance of the metrical precepts. But, notwithstanding all this, such composition is far from being confused in contents, or arbitrary in form; for that is just the mystery of heavenly inspiration, that it is the highest order in the midst of the greatest apparent arbitrariness, and that it creates laws whilst it seems to bid defiance to all laws. And thus we find the burden of our song clearly divided into two most characteristic parts, namely: 1st, in a *retrospect* upon the deliverance from the land of the Egyptians, and the punishment of the impious enemies (ver. 1—12); and, 2nd, a *prospective view* into the future, describing the terror of the warlike neighbouring nations, the Philistines, the Edomites, the Moabites, and lastly of the Canaanitish tribes, and penetrating, with a prophetic eye, forward to that glorious event which formed the noblest aim of the Egyptian redemption—the erection of the sanctuary on Moriah (ver. 13—18). In the Decalogue also we find those two elements: in the first commandment an allusion to Egyptian servitude; in the fourth, to the land of promise. Readers susceptible of great poetical impressions, may, from these wide outlines, imagine what scope for gigantic descriptions is opened in such theme: the omnipotence of the Lord, the vindictiveness of the enemies, their ferocity and their destruction, praise and jubilation, gratitude and promises and hopes; and they will thank us that we do not, by anatomizing, annihilate the beautiful organism of the song—that we do not offend the obvious presence of the deity by profane declamation. But we must call attention to the wonderful instinct with which the poet, just at this moment, when the Israelitish nation happened to be between Egypt and Palestine, both as regards time and place, when they left the land of their ignominy with mixed feelings of joy and apprehension, and impatiently longed to reach the promised abodes of their future glory, that he, just then, described that double relation with so firm a hand and such characteristic traits. And thus has that, which many critics consider as a historical anticipation, carrying us into the times of David and Solomon, been ennobled into a poetical beauty by the sanctity of prophetic

inspiration. And Herder remarks, in this respect: "If this poem contains parts which, it might seem, could not well have been sung in that period, it must be remembered, that the temple, the holy places, and the land, which the Israelites were destined to occupy, existed already clearly in God's and Moses' minds; and the latter prepared the people successfully for the exertions and sacrifices necessary for the realization of their hopes."

The same master-mind which manifests itself in the contents, is easily obvious in the form also. This ode has, with regard to the metre, shared the same fate with all the other poetical compositions of the Old Testament; some have discovered in it the artificial Greek measures, especially the Sapphic strophe, others the iambic and anapestic rhythm, as Bellermann, who, in order to carry out his theory, arbitrarily divides our chapter into forty verses; and, where such operations are unavailable, the prosodists either propose self-invented metrical rules, at variance with every analogy, or they change the vowels of the sacred text, asserting that the correct pronunciation of Hebrew is totally lost to us, or, lastly, where all this even is insufficient to support their aerial systems, they admit that the metre and the feet of the verses frequently vary according to the varying contents of the poem, and they thus destroy, with their own hands, the laboriously erected edifice of a metrical art, the first and chief law of which would necessarily be the uniformity and the regular recurrence of the same feet. Certainly, the efforts to trace the metre of our song are justifiable, since Josephus distinctly observes, that it is composed in hexameter verse; and similar assertions we find in Philo, Eusebius, Jerome, and Isidorus Hispalensis. But none of all these writers has so much as tried the attempt to prove their hypothesis in one single verse; and the conjecture of Löscher, that those authors had, in that assertion, regarded the members or parts of the verses, rather than the measure of the syllables, is the more plausible, as it seems impossible, practically to apply any of those metres to our song, according to the laws of classical prosody. But, instead of this, we find here that free rhythmical grace, and that "parallelism of the members" which has, ever since the middle of the last century, been acknowledged as the only characteristic metre of Hebrew poetry, and which, indeed, forming a sort of rhyme of the *sense*, is capable of representing the lyrical inspiration of the soul with more vigour, originality and enthusiasm, than all artificial metres based merely on the uniformity of syllables. Whilst the poet seems merely intent upon expressing his idea with greater and greater lucidity, power and energy, assailing, in the impulse and fire of his effusions, the mind of the reader, from different sides with new images and new arguments, this very reiteration and renewal of attempts constitute a harmony of the form, the effects of which are the more overpowering, the more the modified form is adapted to the modified idea. Thus that parallelism of the members, if judiciously applied, produces the same beauty, and certainly implies the same power and grandeur as the complicated metres of the classics; and so far from imposing upon the poet the same burdensome fetters, it supports and facilitates the expression of the ideas, by those repetitions and additions peculiarly adapted for rounding and finishing the sentence. It is true, we are accustomed not only to expect a regular metre, in poetical composition, but even to consider it indispensable. But De Wette observes justly: "Everything depends on the character of the poem. Göthe has, just in the most sublime odes, disdained strict and regular metres, and contented himself with a certain free euphony. This formlessness has, indeed, a more elevated character than a certain prescribed form, and as sublimity is the character of the Hebrew poetry, the absence of regular metres cannot be found surprising." However this may be, the parallelism of the members seems to be a fundamental rhythmical law in all poetry; it forms the basis of the rhyme, of the strophe and antistrophe, the distich (hexameter and pentameter), the stanza, the ottaverrime, and almost all modern metres.

The three principal kinds of parallelism occur in our poem also, namely: I. the

synonymous parallelism (which consists of two or more members expressing *the same* idea with different words), in ver. 2 (second half), ver. 3 (see note), vers. 4, 6, 8 (where the same idea, concerning the great miracle of the drying up of the sea, is thrice repeated), vers. 11, 14 and 17.—II. The *antithetical* parallelism (which consists in the *opposition* of the ideas), in ver. 16 (where the four members contain a double antithesis), ver. 19 (which certainly approaches already to prosaic diction, and does not perhaps strictly belong to the poem, see note); and, III, the *synthetic* parallelism (where a mere *co-ordination*, or a simple *progress* of the ideas, takes place), which is the most frequent in this song, and is the most lively form of parallelism, because it leads the sense onward: vers. 1, 2 (first half), 5, 7 (where the second member is, with peculiar emphasis, divided into two parts), 10, 12, 13, 15. Besides these, we find a remarkable instance of a merely rhythmical parallelism, which, without synonym, antithesis, or synthesis, only consists in a harmonious division of the parts, and describes the progressing action with particular emphasis; it is in ver. 9: "The enemy said, I will pursue; overtake; divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them."—And the whole concludes with a brief and pithy ejaculation: "The Lord will reign for ever and ever" (ver. 18), forming a finished unity with the beginning: "I will sing to the Lord" (ver. 1).

From this short outline the reader, gifted with an imaginative mind, will derive already some notion of the power and variety displayed in this song, and will, we hope, be better prepared to appreciate its poetical beauties, than if, like some writers have done, we had indulged in empty exclamations on the elegance of every individual syllable, or word, or similar minutæ.—But the assertion, that our poem compared with the blessing of Jacob (Gen. xlix.) manifests a great progress and development, apparently originates in a want of logical distinctness. Both compositions are equally perfect in their kind; but the blessing of Jacob is a prophecy, and therefore necessarily abrupt, obscure, and brief; whilst our song is a lyric ode, and leaves therefore naturally more scope to imagination, and is more perspicuous and descriptive; the one has to depict the changeful fates of twelve tribes with a few emphatic words; the other has to delineate one single historical fact, poetical in itself, with all the means of artistic invention; both productions are, therefore, of heterogeneous, but not unequal merits; the difference lies only in their nature, not in the execution of the subjects treated; and as our song has become the model of the lyrical ode, so is that blessing the type of prophetic revelations.—But we add a remark of Herder, both a poetical and philosophical mind, about the grand economy of our poem: "The passage through the Red Sea has given occasion to the oldest and most harmonious triumphal song, which we possess in the Hebrew language.... Its structure is simple, full of assonances and rhymes, which I am unable to render in our language, without violence to the words: for the Hebrew language is rich in such sounding assonances, on account of its uniform organism. Light, long, but few words echo away in the air, and mostly a deep monosyllabic sound finishes the verse."

But we have to discuss one feature more, which materially contributes to the singular effect which this ode is calculated to produce. It would appear partly from the introduction: "Then sang *Moses and the children of Israel*," partly from vers. 21 and 22, in which it is related, that Miriam, the sister of Moses, went out with timbrels and dances, singing, "Praise the Lord, for He is exalted gloriously; the horse and its rider hath He thrown into the sea"; it would appear from these circumstances, with some probability, that our song was recited with the accompaniment of a chorus. How this was executed was already among the Rabbins a much disputed question. Some say, that the Israelites responded to Moses after every verse with the words, "I will sing to the Lord," etc. Others believe, that the Hebrews repeated every sentence, as Moses sang it before them. But Rabbi Nehemiah is of opinion, that Moses began with the words: "Then shall Israel sing," and the Israelites fell in: "I

will sing to the Lord," etc.; Moses then continued: "The Lord is my praise and song," etc.; and the Israelites resumed: "He is my God, and I will glorify Him," etc.; and so on through the whole song.—According to Midrash Tanchuma, Moses recited alone the whole poem in the name of all Israel.—But Philo observes: "This song on the Red Sea was chaunted by all the men; not blindly and wildly, but with a clear consciousness, Moses singing every verse before them. The women recited it likewise under the direction of Miriam. And this hymn was sung by the two choruses; for it has an admirable *epodos* (refrain), extremely agreeable to repeat." Nor are these the only conjectures proposed on this subject; it avails little to enumerate them, as all are but personal suppositions, devoid of every Biblical foundation. In similar disputed cases, in which everything is to be derived from reflection and imagination, and nothing from the sacred text, the simplest interpretation, and that most suitable to the circumstances, is the most preferable. First, no statement of the text *compels* us to suppose a choral song. If it is stated, "that Moses and the children of Israel" sang this hymn, the one may be considered as its author, whilst the others learnt it by heart and sang it with him, according to the analogy of David's elegy on the death of Saul and Jonathan, which the poet ordered to teach the people (2 Sam. i. 18). And the recitation of the quoted words of Miriam, "with timbrels and with dances," points only to a combination, so common in antiquity, of poetry, music, and dance. But even if we suppose the application of choruses in the chaunting of this hymn, the remark in vers. 20 and 21, leads us with sufficient certainty to the conjecture, that if one recited the song, the chorus responded with the words: "Sing to the Lord, for He is gloriously exalted; the horse and its rider hath He thrown into the sea," like a kind of refrain, after appropriate points of rest or sections of the poem; perhaps after ver. 3 (the briefness and pith of which is itself well suitable for such refrain); after ver. 5 (where the description of the ruin of the Egyptians is finished); after ver. 10, (to where the anger of God is represented); after ver. 17 (to where God's mercy in guiding Israel into the Holy Land, the building of the temple, and the annihilation of all enemies is described, who might oppose them in this double purpose); and as a most appropriate conclusion serves the 18th verse: "The Lord will reign for ever and ever." It is remarkable, that each of these parts commences with a praise of God; so that the hymn, perfectly in harmony with the beginning words: "I will sing to the Lord," etc., seems to be intended as a song of praise to God, but most characteristically coloured by the events of the moment; which is a new proof of its authenticity. Such a similar participation of the chorus in the recital of the triumphal hymn, is not only natural and easy, but in accordance with the usage of most ancient and modern nations; it is as impressive as it is unaffected; and could easily be performed even by a numerous people unskilled in the secrets of art (compare Ps. cxxxvi). Most of the other conjectures destroy the native vigour and originality of the song.—Thus the objection, that it was impossible to teach so quickly an uncultivated nation, as the Hebrews then were, so long and elaborate a poem, is of no weight, and might besides, be removed by considering that the adverb *then*, does not exactly signify the moment or even day of their arrival at the eastern coast of the Red Sea, but only *about that time*, between their passage and their departure to the wilderness of Shur. It has further been acknowledged, that this song is distinguished by a remarkable simplicity of ideas and expressions, that it contains very few of those bold elliptical constructions, which constitute one of the chief difficulties of Hebrew poetry, and that, however grand and sublime, it is so easy and clear, that even the multitude might comprehend and learn it. Further, the *length* of the poem has, in the minds of some critics, raised doubts as to its authenticity; since the *epinicia* of the Hebrews and other nations are usually but very brief ejaculations, as, for instance, that song of the women in 1 Sam. xviii. 7: "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." But on the one hand, the occasion for an enthusiastic song of praise was in our case

by far more grand and sublime than at the first victories of David, and on the other hand, nothing prevents us from regarding that verse also as the mere refrain of some longer song, quite similar to our case, where the women repeat likewise, in very few impressive words, the burden and tendency of the ode.—But that Moses was able to compose so quickly, and almost *extempore*, so elaborate a song, will appear surprising to those only, who are not familiar with the astonishing facility with which Oriental poets exercise the art of improvisation, and who have not clearly represented to themselves the grand and overwhelming situation, in which this poem has been conceived, and which was of that extraordinary nature, which carries the mind beyond its natural capacities and inspires it with an enthusiasm not ordinarily belonging to it.

THEN sang Moses and the children of Israel this song to the Lord, and spoke, saying: I will sing to the Lord, for ¹He is gloriously exalted: the horse and its rider hath He thrown into the sea. 2. The Lord is my ²praise and song, ³for He hath become my salvation; He is my God, and I will ⁴glorify Him; my father's God, and I will exalt Him. 3. The Lord is a man of war:

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—He hath triumphed gloriously.

² Strength.

³ And.

⁴ Prepare him an habitation.

1. The notes which we can here offer on this sublime hymn are necessarily brief; for its beauties can only be appreciated and enjoyed if it is considered from the Hebrew text, the power and nerve of which is inimitable in any translation or paraphrase. Those who are not acquainted with the holy tongue, lose here both many vigorous ideas and poetical beauties of the highest order. We refer, for a more copious philological explanation, to the larger edition of this commentary.

I will sing to the Lord. These words, to the end of the verse, express the aim and tendency of this poem as a song of praise to God for the deliverance of Israel and the destruction of the Egyptians; and are, therefore, pre-eminently adapted as a refrain for the chorus. The verse itself is, both in its individual members, and in its structure as a whole, an excellent, most powerful, and suitable introduction to the following descriptions, and betrays the master at the very commencement.

2. *He is my God*, etc. The sense is: The God who has shown Himself merciful and gracious to my forefathers, has

now glorified Himself through me also; thus the God of tradition has become a God of my own experience, the God of belief, a God of knowledge.

3. *The Lord is a man of war.* God has annihilated the powerful enemies, who approached with a formidable might; and thus He has shown Himself as a God of war and battles.—The short sentence concludes with the very significant words, *the Eternal is His name*. It is obvious, that *Jehovah* is here used with regard to iii. 15, and vi. 3, where this holy name of the "Eternal and unchangeable God" was, in its full and deep meaning, first revealed to Moses and the people of Israel, with the promise that He would lead them miraculously from the Egyptian thralldom, after fearful chastisement of their adversaries. Now, when this promise has been so gloriously realized, His whole unfathomed might and grandeur are comprised in the attributes of His nature, which is expressed and manifested by His very name.—After this short emphatical verse, which condenses all the preceding ideas in one shout of jubilation, the introduction of our poem is finished, and it proceeds now to the description

the Eternal *is* His name.—4. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea: ¹his choicest warriors are drowned in the Red Sea. 5. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. 6. Thy right hand, O Lord, ²glorified in power, thy right hand, O Lord, ³dashes in pieces the enemy. 7. And in the greatness of Thy ⁴sublimity Thou ⁵overthrowest those who ⁶rise up against thee: Thou ⁷sendest forth Thy wrath; it consumes them as stubble. 8. And with the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were ⁸piled up, the floods

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—His chosen captains.

² Is become glorious.

³ Hath dashed.

⁴ Excellency.

⁵ Hast overthrowen.

⁶ Rose.

⁷ Sentest.

⁸ Gathered together.

of the overthrow of the enemies (vers. 4—8).

The verses 6 and 7, may be considered as a general description of God's omnipotence and justice, to which the poet feels himself urgently invited by the remembrance of the late glorious events; so that only in ver. 8, the application on the present case, the destruction of the *Egyptians*, would follow; we may, therefore, aptly translate the verbs as present tenses: "Thy right hand, O Lord, dashes the enemy," etc., by which those exclamations evidently gain in intensity; for they cease to be single facts of a transitory experience; but they become general and permanent truths. The anthropomorphistic expressions: "the right hand of God," "man of war," etc.; will not give offence to those, who can feel purely and poetically. If God is at all to be praised by human language, scarcely a more powerful, majestic, and dignified form can be imagined, than that of this incomparable song.

7. *And in the greatness of Thy excellency Thou overthrowest those who rise up against Thee*, that is, Thy adversaries, those who oppose themselves to Thy will, here referring to the Egyptians. Onkelos, Jonathan, Rashi, and others, explain less plausibly, "Thou overthrowest those who rise up against *Thy people Israel*;" after the analogy of Ps. lxxxiii. 3, 4.—The wrath of God consumes the enemies with the same facility and rapidity with which fire devours the stubble of the field

(see note on xxii. 5). Compare Is. v. 24; xvii. 14.

8. After the poet has, in the three preceding verses, dilated upon the power of God, with which He punishes and destroys the wicked, he now describes His mercy towards those who have committed themselves to His protection; and how unlimited this love is, he proves from the astounding miracle of the division of the sea, which, giving up its nature, formed, with its waves, a firm wall, and, instead of streaming like a fluid, congealed into a hard substance.

9. One of the most beautiful descriptions is, perhaps, contained in this verse, which delineates, with as much poetical grace as characteristic vigour, the fury, the vindictiveness, and the sanguinary vehemence of the foes. The brief but pithy sentences, introduced without connection or conjunction, are heaped in irregular abundance, to represent the insatiable desire of the adversaries: "The enemy said, I will pursue; overtake; divide the spoil; my lust be satisfied upon them."—According to some interpreters (as Rashbam and others) Pharaoh uttered this self-exhortation, when he saw, that the sea had divided itself before the Israelites, and when he was seized by the natural desire to avail himself of this miracle for himself and his army also, and thus to conquer the Israelites already in the sea. With this opinion, the contents of the following verse do not dis-

stood upright like a ⁹mound, *and* the depths congealed in the heart of the sea.—9. The enemy said, I will pursue; overtake; divide the spoil; my lust be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them:—10. Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters. 11. Who *is* like Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who *is* like Thee, glorious in holiness, awful *in* praises, doing wonders? 12. Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand: the earth swallowed them.

⁹ *Engl. Vers.*—Heap.

agree: "But Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them." However, in a high lyrical enthusiasm, the poet returns once more to the beginning, describing with a few, but rapid and vigorous traits, the operations of the enemies, from the moment, when the idea of pursuing the Israelites arose in their minds, a desire which was to end with the fearful overthrow of their power. Thus we see in *one* significant moment the sanguinary Egyptians return to their obduracy, equip themselves for war, depart, pursue, and perish in the sea. Where with so simple means has so powerful a rhetorical effect been ever produced?

11. Deeply moved by the remembrance of the chastisement of the haughty enemies, whose destruction the poet had once more represented to his mind with the most lively colours, he breaks out into an enthusiastic praise of God, whom no being of the whole universe can ever equal in grandeur, in holiness, in exalted glory and miraculous power.—*Who is like Thee*, etc. The Egyptians had naturally under the auspices of their gods, that is, of those beings, whom *they* considered to be *mighty gods*, marched against the Israelites. Therefore, together with the Egyptians their gods also had been conquered; and most appropriate is, therefore, the exclamation: "Who is like Thee, O Lord, among the gods?" Whether the idols of the heathens are indeed gods, is here indifferent; *they* call them so, and therefore

those who mention them are compelled to designate them with that name, although such idol is in reality "a not-god," who is god in name, not in reality (Deut. xxxii. 21; comp. note on vi. 7).—*Who is like Thee glorious in holiness*. God has anew manifested His holiness by miraculously protecting the righteous and annihilating the wicked.

12. *Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand: the earth swallowed them*. Geddes believes that these words would more suitably stand after the tenth verse than here, which remark seems to have the greater probability, as, with verse 11, the first chief part of the poem, the retrospect into the past, is finished. However, 1st, These words explain the conclusion of the 11th verse, "doing wonders"; 2nd, they comprise, once more, the leading idea of the first part, in a few concise words; and, 3rd, they form an appropriate transition to the following verses: God destroyed the Egyptians by a wonder in the sea; but He leads the Israelites lovingly on into the land of promise. So this verse forms, most internally, the connection between the two principal parts of the song, pointing as it does, in one respect, to the first, in another, to the latter part. *Thou stretchedst out*, etc. see xiv. 26. *The earth swallowed them*, that is, the deep abyss of the sea, which covers the earth.

13. The verbs of this and the following verse are, according to the sense, futures,

13. Thou in Thy mercy ¹leadest forth the people which Thou hast redeemed; Thou ²guidest *them* in Thy strength to Thy holy habitation. 14. The ³nations will hear *it*, and will be afraid; ⁴terror will seize the inhabitants of ⁵Philistia. 15. Then the chiefs of Edom will be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling will seize them; all the inhabitants of Canaan will melt away *with fear*. 16. Fear and dread will fall upon them; by the greatness

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Hast led.² Hast guided.³ People.⁴ Sorrow.⁵ Palestina.

but may, with poetical vivacity, be translated as presents, till, in verse 15, the text itself passes over into the future forms. Those who date the origin of this song in the times of David or Solomon, translate those verbs here naturally as preterites: "thou hast led," etc. as also the English Version, although its authors certainly did not question the authenticity of the poem (see *supra*, p. 196). The following part describes, in prophetic images, the providence of God for the Israelites, shielding them till they have overcome the dangers of the desert, conquered the nations of Canaan, and erected the sanctuary on Zion.—*The people which Thou hast redeemed*. Not in vain has God so miraculously delivered Israel from Egyptian servitude; His mighty deeds in favour of His people are a pledge that He has selected it for some glorious future; and thus is the redemption a guarantee for the safe arrival into, and the happy conquest of, Canaan; one mercy is the harbinger of other acts of graciousness. Ebn Ezra, and others, are of opinion, that the "holy habitation" here alluded to, is Mount Sinai, on which God dwelt when He revealed the Law through Moses. But both the enumeration of the hostile tribes, which become only of importance when the Israelites attempted to enter into Canaan, and the distinct expressions of verse 17, prove sufficiently that here the Mount Moriah, and the holy temple, are hinted at. However, Canaan, or the *Holy Land*, may, likewise, as Rashbam believes, be denoted in that place, as it is

sometimes called "The Habitation of God." Compare Jer. i. 19.

14. The report of the fearful judgment executed against the Egyptians, spreads such terror among the nations in and around Canaan, that they tremble before the approaching Israelites; and they partly permit them to pass through their country, and partly leave it to them as an easy prey.—*Philistia* consisted of a narrow tract of land along the coast of the Mediterranean, from Ekron (Josh. xiii. 3), till near the Egyptian frontier, and which bordered on the tribes of Dan, Simeon, and Judah (see note on xiii. 17). It signifies, therefore, not the whole land; for the tribes of Canaan are, in the following verse, mentioned separately.

15. *Then the chiefs of Edom will be amazed*. Edom, a mountain land, intersected by rocks and cliffs, and resembling a natural fortress, was situated at the south-eastern frontier of Palestine, and especially of the tribe of Judah, was originally called the land of Seir, and reached, in the south, to the Elanitic Gulf of the Red Sea. Therefore, the fertile and rich tract of Eb-Shera, including the district of Gebal adjoining it to the north, is the territory of the ancient Moabites, which is thus, according to the Greek division, a part of Arabia Petræa. It is known, that the Edomites positively refused to allow the journey of the Israelites through their land, and thus compelled them to pass round it, under the greatest difficulties (Numb. xx. xxi; compare Judges xi. 17, *et seq.*) If our text, therefore, speaks of the terror of

of Thy arm they will be dumb as stone; till they pass, O Lord, till the people pass, which Thou hast acquired. 17. Thou wilt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thy inheritance, *in* the place, O Lord, *which* Thou hast made for Thy abode, *in* the sanctuary, O Lord, *which* Thy hands have established. 18. THE LORD WILL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER.—19. For the horse of Pharaoh went with its chariots and with its horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought back the waters of the sea upon

the Edomites, this is more a momentary effect of the divine omnipotence, without lasting consequences, just as Pharaoh showed a temporary submission after each plague, but soon hardened himself again into his old obstinacy. It is further to be remarked, that “the Edomites did not exactly *fight* against the Israelites in the desert” (*Ebn Ezra*).—*The mighty men of Moab, trembling shall seize them.* The Israelites did not, on their wanderings and marches from the Red Sea, touch the territory of the Moabites (Deut. ii. 9; Judges xi. 15, 18), by whom they were even provided with many necessities (Deut. ii. 28); but later, after the mighty king Sihon had been subdued, the king of Moab, Balak, tried to induce the famous Balaam to curse the Israelites (Numb. xxii. etc). They lived in the east of the Dead Sea and of the Jordan, but had already before the immigration of the Israelites into Canaan, been confined by the Amorites, under their king Sihon, to the south of the river Arnon (Numb. xxi. 13, 26). From here their territory extended southwards to the “willow-brook” (Isaiah xv. 7), that is, Wadi-el-Ahsi, and formed thus a part of the present Kerrek. The Moabites were, almost uninterruptedly, in a hostile political position against the Israelites, and, in the prophetic writings, they are very frequently mentioned with menaces and imprecations, (Isa. xi. 14, 15, 16; Amos ii. 1; Zeph. ii. 8); and, in a similar sense, they are already named here.

16. The terror, the anguish and extermination of the enemies, are further de-

scribed. That fear is aptly compared with the “becoming dumb like a stone”; they will remain quiet and motionless, without in any way opposing the transit of the Israelites.—*The people which Thou hast acquired*, namely, by the redemption from Egypt; “they were servants to the Egyptians, now Thou hast acquired them to be Thy servants” (*Ebn Ezra*); compare vi. 7; xiii. 2; Deut. iv. 34.

17. *And plant them.* *Planting*, signifies, figuratively, to grant a *firm*, safe abode, which has, as it were, taken deep roots. Comp. Amos ix. 15; Ps. xlv. 3; lxxx. 9.—That the allusions to the conquest of Canaan and the building of the temple, neither exclude the authorship of Moses, nor lead to a later time, as that of David or Solomon, has been observed in the prefatory remarks to this chapter, pp. 195, 196.

18. The exode from Egypt is happily effected; the tyrannical king, and the revengeful army, have become a prey of the waves; in his mind, the poet sees already the realization of his most glorious hopes, the possession of the land, and the erection of the sanctuary—and, inspired by the wisdom, power, and mercy of the Lord, he bursts once more forth as into an energetic paean, “The Lord will reign for ever and ever”—and with this emphatic ejaculation the immortal song concludes.

19. For this verse does no more belong to the poem; but, forming the transition to the following narrative, it mentions once again the historical facts on which the song is based. The diction is perfectly prosaic, without rhythm or paral-

them; but the children of Israel went on dry *land* through the sea.

20. And Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took the timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. 21. And Miriam

lelism. This was already the opinion of Rashbam, whom many later commentators have justly followed. But Ebn Ezra, and others, believe that this verse forms a part of the song, and that it is intended briefly to rehearse the wonders of the Red Sea. In the Jewish Scrolls of the Law, this verse is also embodied in the song.

20. And Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took the timbrel in her hand, etc.... Miriam is here designated as *prophetess*. The use of this name has the less difficulty in this instance, as it appears from Numbers xii. 2, that Miriam was really considered as a prophetess in the usual acceptation of the word, however inferior her prophetic gift was to that of Moses (ver. 6). Compare *Mich.* vi. 4; and *Talm. Sot.* 12 b. But that the word *prophet* is also applied in a more extended sense with regard to those, who, inspired by a higher intelligence, suggest to others the words, they wish to promulgate, has been observed in our notes on iv. 6 and vii. 1, to which we refer. Still more comprehensive is the application of *prophet* in the meaning of *favourite* and *friend of God*, whom He uses as an instrument, to proclaim His nature and His wisdom, as, for instance, with respect to Abraham (Gen. xx. 7); or the Patriarchs (Ps. cv. 15). It is evident, that Moses is, in the Pentateuch, called *prophet*, because he combines in his person all those three categories or degrees (see Num. xii. 6; Deut. xviii. 15—20; xxxiv. 10).—But the etymology of the Hebrew word leads to the meaning of *singer* or *poet*. Music and recitative song were no doubt a very impressive accompaniment of the prophetic dicta; and therefore the different significations of *prophet* may, ultimately, have been combined in one notion; as in Latin, *vates* means both prophet and poet; and if

therefore, Samuel (according to 1 Sam. x. 5; xix. 19, 20) trained a number of *prophets*, these might have been theocratical preachers or speakers, who were at the same time instructed in the musical delivery of their discourses, and who could thus not lack opportunities for the exercise of their poetical abilities also; and so we read in the former passage distinctly: “thou wilt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psalttery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they will prophesy.” For the sublime subjects and the solemn occasions, on which the public orator pronounced his addresses, were naturally calculated to carry him away, almost spontaneously, to a higher flight of speech, to a more elegant and even poetical diction. But, nevertheless, we are not justified in acceding unconditionally to Herder’s remark, which has been too extensively adopted: “Miriam and Deborah are called prophetesses, because they were inspired poetesses; and sacred poetry was always considered as the language of the gods.” This is essentially correct if limited to heathen nations, especially the Greeks and Romans, who regarded the poets, as such, standing under the influence of Apollo or the Muses, or other deities of poetry; and although Apollo was both the God of divination and of song, these two qualities were as little united by a higher, internal and necessary bond, as the various attributes of Diana or Mercury. It was different with the Hebrew prophets. Not the *language* was inspired by the deity, but the *ideas*; every prophet retained his individual style, and he expressed the thoughts which he was commanded to proclaim in the manner which appeared to him personally most effective. Among

answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for He 'is gloriously exalted; the horse and its rider hath He thrown into the sea.—22. And Moses caused Israel to journey from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur;

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Hath triumphed gloriously.

the heathens, poetical *diction* is regarded as an emanation of the gods, or as inspiration; among the Hebrews, the language is, in itself, no mark of a higher influence; for prophets were not *necessarily* poets (for instance, Abijah, Elijah, Elisha, and others), nor were the poets necessarily prophets, in the strict sense of the word (for instance, David, Solomon, and others).—Miriam is called the sister of Aaron, because, as Rashbam observes, he was her *elder* brother (compare Gen. xxviii. 9).

The hand-drum, Spanish, *Aduffa*, or *Doeff*, Tambourine; consists of a hoop of wood or metal, of about one hand-breadth, and covered over with leather; it is still a very favourite instrument in the East on festive and sacred occasions (Gen. xxxi. 27; Job xxi. 12; 2 Sam. vi. 5; Is. v. 12, etc.). It is beaten by the hand, and serves especially to keep the tact in singing and dancing. It is usually played by females at public processions and in choral dances, as the instrument more generally appropriated to men was the flute (Judg. xi. 34; 1 Sam. xviii. 6; Psalms lxviii. 26, etc.). At the rim thin round bells are frequently fastened, which increase the strength of the tone. But the Egyptian timbrels were probably not provided with such bells, as the representations on monuments show, from which it also appears, that the Egyptians knew three kinds of tambourine: one was circular, another square or oblong, and the third consisted of two squares separated by a bar. Our text shows further a remarkable coincidence with Egyptian manners in the circumstance, that here also the chorus of the men sings and dances separately from that of the women. That the Egyptians frequently dance to the sound of the tambourine, without the addition of any other music, is con-

firmed by modern travellers. Sacred music and sacred dances were also in very general use among the Egyptians from very early times. For we see further in our verse joined with the prophecy, besides the music, also the *dance*. "What enthusiastic luxuriance this imparted to the song, when an assembled nation executed it for the glory of God, or as some public thanksgiving, full of national pride and national joy, this may be left to the feeling of every reader to represent to himself. On such occasion, not artificial, but enraptured music and language were required; no cold conventional rules fettered the souls, no northern clime constrained the tunes. The song of Moses and of Miriam, the united hymn of a delivered host of many thousands, who praise their God with the sound of timbrels and with dances under an Arabian sky; where is a song soaring aloft like this?" (*Herder*, *Ebr. Poes.* ii. p. 30). About the different kinds, and the nature of Oriental, especially Egyptian, dances, see *Wilkinson*, *Manners* ii. p. 328—340.

21. *And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, etc.* Moses conducted the chorus of the men; so Miriam that of the women, who sang either at the end of the poem, or after its principal parts, the words, which form the beginning of the hymn, and which contain, as it were, its theme and burden in brief and expressive words, and which are therefore very much adapted for such refrain (see *supra*, p. 198). That among many ancient, and some modern, little-civilized nations, very short pæans, incessantly repeated for hours with dance and music, are much in use, is testified by numerous travellers (see *Rosenmüller*, *Orient.* ii. p. 23—26).

22—23. These verses relate a miracle

and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. 23. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter:

which happened a few days after the transit over the Red Sea, on its eastern coast, in the desert of Shur. The waters of Marah were unpalatable on account of their bitterness; God showed to Moses a species of wood, which he threw into the fountain, and which made the water drinkable. We have here again an event, which our text evidently represents as a wonder, but which many expositors have yet tried to interpret as a natural occurrence. It is true, that such explanation is favoured by the fact, that in some regions trees are found, the wood of which, if thrown into bitter, saltish, or otherwise undrinkable water, makes and preserves it available and tasteful. This power possesses, for instance, the tree *Nellimaram*, which grows at the coast of Coromandel; further the plant *Yerva Caniani* in Peru, the tree *Sassafras* in Florida, the *Perru Nelli* (*Phylanthus emblica*) in East India; and even the Chinese are said to have originally used the tea in order to correct the bad qualities of their water. We may further remark, that Burckhardt throws out the conjecture (though it is not very probable) that the berries of the *Gharkad* might have been used to sweeten the waters of Marah. It is a low, bushy, thorny shrub, producing a small fruit, which ripens in June, not unlike the blackberry, very juicy, and slightly acidulous, and grows near the brackish fountains in and around Palestine. But according to the testimony of Niebuhr (*Descript. of Arab.* p. 403) there exists in Arabia, no tree which produces a similar effect on the water; in which case the inhabitants of those tracts would not omit to avail themselves of so welcome a means for improving their water, which is there, in the nitrous soil, almost invariably salinous and vitiated. We admit, our text does not state, that the transmutation of the water was effected by a direct

wonder, for instance, by the simple command of Moses; but that the latter applied, for that purpose, by the direction of God, a certain tree; and perhaps the special providence of God consisted here in the circumstance, that He *taught* Moses that remarkable quality of the tree, whilst it was not known before, nor was discovered later. That it was any tree, which did in no way possess that virtue, is improbable, as it would be strange, to throw wood into the water as a mere *symbol* of changing its taste. Jewish tradition calls the tree *hirdophne*; the Karaites, *Nerium Oleander*; the Arabian tradition calls it *Aluah*, the herb *Galgant*, with its root. To fix upon a certain tree is impossible, unless one possessing similar properties should be discovered in that region.—The Israelites were naturally the more vexed at the bitter waters of Marah, as they were accustomed to the incomparably agreeable water of the Nile (see note on vii. 18).—We add, however, the following narration of our event, by Josephus, who seems to point at the combination of miraculous and natural influence still more distinctly; and observe, that travellers have related similar procedures practised in other parts of the globe, under similar circumstances: “Moses took the top of a stick which was lying at his feet, divided it in the middle, and made the sections lengthways; he then let it down into the well, and persuaded the Hebrews that God had hearkened to his prayers, and had promised to render the water such as they desired it to be, in case they eagerly and zealously obeyed Him in what He should enjoin them to do; and when they asked what they had to do, in order to have the water changed for the better, he bid the strongest men among them who stood there, to draw up water, and told them that when the greatest part was drawn up the remainder would be fit to drink:

therefore the name of it was called Marah. 24. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? 25. And he cried to the Lord; and the Lord

so they laboured at it till the water was so agitated and purged as to be fit to drink." (Antiq. III. i. 2); see also 2 Kings iii. 16—18, and compare with it *Josephus*, Bell. Jud. IV. viii. 3, where Elisha changed the bitter and barren spring near Jericho, by "an earthen vessel full of salt and proper operations of his hands after a skilful manner."

After the Israelites had reached the eastern coast of the Gulf of Suez, opposite Kolsoom (see on xiv. 1—3), they continued their march for three days in a south-easterly direction, along the coast, through deserted, sterile and hilly parts, passing by the "Well of Moses." We have already observed, on xiii. 20, that the barren region east of the head of the Gulf is called the desert of Etham or Shur, whilst the tract on both sides of it is the desert Dshofar; and Saadiah translates Shur by Dshofar, whilst *Josephus* (Antiq. VI. vii. 3) renders it by Pelusium. Still now a desert El-Dshofar extends between the Arabic Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea, at the western and north-western border of the desert El-Tih, from Pelusium to the south-western frontier of the old Palestine. *Abulfeda* (Descript. p. 13, 14) includes that desert in Egypt. It consists of white sand, has but few cultivated spots, and is about a seven days' journey in length. Now, the probable situation of Marah compels us to suppose the desert Dshofar to have extended still farther to the south than it does at present, according to modern geography. For Marah is, probably, the fountain Howarah, which lies about eight German miles south-east of the head of the Gulf, and the bitter and saltish water of which is famous throughout the whole country, and even camels disdain it unless they are extremely thirsty. "The fountain of Howarah is situated in a

rocky valley, two or three miles in diameter. It is near the centre of this valley, and springs out of the top of a mound, which has the form of a flattened hemisphere, and an elevation of, perhaps, thirty or forty feet above the general level of the valley. The water rises into a basin, which is formed by the deposit of a hard shining substance, and may be from eight to ten feet long, by a breadth somewhat less; in depth it is about five or six feet, and contains three feet of water." (*Kitto*, on ver. 23; see *Burckhardt*, ii. 777; *Robinson*, i. 106). The ancient tradition, which considers "the Well of Moses," about two German miles south-east of Suez, as our Marah, is improbable, as a journey of three days was not required for such a little distance. If, therefore, Howarah, which the caravans touch even now on their journey to the Sinai, is our Marah, and if this was indeed situated in the desert Shur, this desert must have reached along the Dshebel-er-Rahat to the beginning of the desert Sin, so that the Cape Hammam Bluff was its south-eastern boundary. — *There He* [God] *made for them a statute and an ordinance.* These words find their simple explanation in the contents of the following verse: the law which God made then for the people of Israel, was, that if they continued to follow and obey Him, they would be free from all dangers and evils. We pass, therefore, by the supposition, that, besides the so-called seven laws of Noah (see on xxii. 20), the precepts of Sabbath, and the duties of filial love, were here enjoined to the Israelites, or that general directions were given to them about their conduct to each other and to the surrounding tribes, in war and peace. — *And there He tried them,* namely, by the want of water which they suffered, as if to try how they would bear this first privation, whether they would

showed him a tree; and he cast it into the water, and the waters were made sweet: there He made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He tried them; 26. And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and do that which is right in His eyes,

trust in His promises or not (see xvi. 4; Deut. viii. 16), "Besides," observes Ebn Ezra, "this first wonder, after the passage over the Red Sea, corresponds with the first plague of the Egyptians; in the one case drinkable water became undrinkable, in the other, undrinkable water became drinkable."

26. *I will bring none of those diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians.* By the *diseases* we cannot here understand real sickness, but the plagues with which the Egyptians were visited, and which were certainly still in the fresh and lively memory of the Israelites. And with the same figure the text continues: *For I am the Lord that healeth thee*, that is, who shields thee from misfortunes and dangers, and bestows happiness and prosperity upon thee. Besides, the expression, "who healeth thee," is, perhaps, not unintentionally used with immediate reference to the change of the water; for, in Ezek. xlvii. 8, the phrase "the waters were healed," is applied with regard to the sweetening of bitter and saline water. However, in other passages, as Deut. vii. 15; xxviii. 60 (compare verses 27, 35), real diseases common among the Egyptians are mentioned or alluded to, from which the Hebrews are promised to remain free if they walk in the ways of God. And we certainly are informed, from many sources, that, although the *Egyptians* were one of the healthiest and most robust nations of antiquity (*Herod.* ii. 33), the *land* was infested with peculiar and fearful epidemics. Wagner calls it "a great and universal focus of pestilence." De Chabrol observes: "as the temperature of Egypt is generally uniform, and the sky mostly serene, it has but a small number of diseases, but these are mostly of a

fearful character." Pestilence scarcely ever ceases in Kairo, and especially in Alexandria; dysentery causes an awful mortality, chiefly among children; at least one individual among five is infected with diseases of the eye. Volney found, in Kairo, among one hundred persons whom he met, twenty quite blind, ten wanting one eye, and twenty others whose eyes were either red, or purulent, or blemished, and the small pox rages there much more fearfully than in Europe. Compare *Déscrip.* xiv. p. 216, where a great number of diseases prevalent in the different seasons of the year are specified.

27. From Howarah the Israelites marched on, and arrived at Elim. The situation of this place is more distinctly defined by the statement, that there were twelve fountains or wells, and seventy palm-trees. These circumstances agree, as nearly as possible, with the Wadi Gharendel, which is situated two and a half miles south of Howarah, and two miles north of Tor, in a very beautiful valley, of almost one English mile in length, and abounding in good water. Even according to the most recent travellers, excellent fountains and a great number of trees, especially tamarisks and palm-trees, are still found in that valley, so that it is generally chosen as one of the chief stations on the journey to Sinai. Shaw found there still nine fountains, and more than two thousand palm-trees; and states, that the inhabitants of Tor esteem this spot very highly as the place of encampment of Moses. The other opinions, that Elim is the Wadi Useit, or the Wadi Shebekch, have been refuted by Winer.—The date-, or palm-tree (*Phoenix dactylifera*, L.), which grew formerly in great abundance in different parts of Palestine, as around

and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will bring none of those diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I *am* the Lord that healeth thee.—27. And they came to Elim, where *were* twelve wells of water, and seventy palm-trees: and they encamped there by the water.

Jericho, Engedi, and the Dead Sea, but is now rarely found there, is still very numerous met with in Arabia, Egypt, and Persia, in which countries it was always much planted and cultivated as a most useful tree. It has been introduced in some parts of southern Europe, as in Malaga, where it thrives favourably; in some parts of France (at Bordaghère), from where generally the leaves are sold for Palm Sunday and the Jewish Succoth; and in Italy, as near Genoa, where, however, it does not develop itself to any considerable degree, being here also cultivated only for the sake of the leaves, which are annually sent to the pope's chapel at Rome, where, after having been blessed, they are distributed to the clerical dignitaries as a symbol of the triumph of the church. It requires a light, sandy, warm, but not dry, soil, and indicates, therefore, where it is found, the presence of water, as in the case of our text. The root neither spreads far, in proportion to the tree, nor does it descend deep in the earth. The tree attains a height of thirty or forty feet, sometimes even of sixty or one hundred feet, is often two hundred years old, and has a tall, erect, single stem, marked with a number of protuberances, which are the points of insertion of former leaves; it is about ten to eighteen inches in diameter, and not properly surrounded by a rind, but by scaly layers. "For the centre of the stem is soft and spongy, and the bundles of woody fibres successively produced in the interior are regularly pushed outwards, until the outer part becomes the most dense and hard." The tree bears about from forty to eighty thin boughs, which grow exclusively at the upper part of the stem, becoming shorter the higher they

are, and, with their ends semi-circularly bending to the ground, spread their shadow afar. They stand usually by six in number around the stem, and have reedy, sword-like, evergreen leaves, of about two inches in width, and eight to twelve feet in length. Between the uppermost and the youngest branches is a pointed marrowy *heart*, about two yards long, which conceals in it the germs of the new boughs and leaves. Male and female blossoms are on separate stems. In order, therefore, to be certain of their produce, an artificial system of fecundation is required, in which the exact periods are most scrupulously to be observed. For, in February, shoot from the fissures of the undermost branches, long closed husks, with a hard leather-like skin; they spring up in May, and produce blossoms in the male, and buds in the female tree. The former are then taken off, cut through lengthwise, and put on the female germs. The fruits, which come to maturity within five months, sit in numerous clusters, have the shape of acorns, but are generally larger, and covered with a thin reddish or white skin. The very various uses to which the palm-tree can be applied, in its fruits, branches, fibres, kernels, and its wood, is universally known, and has already been described by Strabo (xvi. 472). The dates are either eaten dry, with bread and *laben* (a preparation of milk), or fried in butter, a very favourite dish of the Bedouin (*Layard, Discoveries*, p. 291). Jewish tradition finds in the twelve wells an allusion to the twelve tribes, and in the seventy palm-trees a reference to the seventy elders; to which modern commentators add, that the wells and palm-trees are types of the twelve apostles and the seventy disciples.

CHAPTER XVI.

SUMMARY.—From Elim (Wadi Gharendel) the Israelites proceed in a south-easterly direction to the desert Sin (in the north of Sinai, see on ver. 1), where they arrive on the fifteenth day of the second month. Threatened with famine in the sterile desert, the Israelites murmur against Moses, and repent their departure from Egypt. In this critical moment, God miraculously grants them abundant food; in the evening a great number of quails covered the ground round the camp (see on ver. 13), and in the morning the manna descended (see on vers. 2 and 15). Of this latter food so much only was to be gathered as was sufficient for the daily use of every family; that which was left became verminous and fetid; but the seventh day the Hebrews were commanded not to gather manna; instead of which they found on the sixth day double of their usual portions. On this occasion the institution of Sabbath was already communicated to the Israelites, although only in its *negative* bearings. As a memorial for later generations an Omer of the manna was to be collected in a vessel set apart for this purpose and preserved before the ark of the covenant. By way of anticipation, our text mentions at the same time, that the Israelites were furnished with the manna for forty years, till after their arrival in Canaan, in the west of the Jordan (see on ver. 35).

AND they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which *is* between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing

1. If from Wadi Gharendel (Elim, xv. 28) the journey is continued to south-east along the coast, it leads, after a march of two days, into the valley of Mokatteb, which is three English miles wide, and three hours long, and lies on the principal road to Sinai. Laborde, Raumer, and others, believe this valley to be the "Desert Sin," in which the Hebrew army encamped, according to our text, one month after the exodus from Egypt. But as the Israelites gathered here the manna in abundance (ver. 14), which is obtained from the tamarisk and the shrub Tarafa (see note on ver. 4), Rosenmüller supposes with greater probability (Antiq. iii. p. 146), that the desert Sin is identical with the Wadi esh-Sheikh, in which those trees grow in great numbers. If we proceed from Wadi Gharendel some distance along the sea, and turn then more to south-east through the Wadi Taybe and Wadi Feiran, we arrive, after three days' journey, at Wadi esh-Sheikh. It is one of the most beautiful valleys which those regions contain, and is much frequented by the Bedouins on account of

its rich pastures. In no part of the peninsula are the tamarisks found so abundantly; and in the southern portion of the valley, they form a dense forest.—Robinson and Lengerke believe the desert Sin to be the waste plain, which extends from El-Murkah along the sea almost to the southern extremity of the peninsula. But it is questionable, whether the manna is there found in such quantity.—But it can in no way be justified, if some critics, as Bohlen (Genes. p. 67, Introd.), identify our Sin with the Egyptian town Sin (Ezek. xxx. 15), which is unquestionably Pelusium, and was situated at the eastern mouth of the Nile. As it was, according to Strabo (xi. 491), 1500 stadia from the northern point of the Red Sea, it is evident, that that opinion is absolutely perverse.—Our text describes the situation of Sin, "between Elim (Gharendel) and the Mount Sinai," or with regard to xvii. 1, between Elim and Rephidim; and with reference to Num. xxxiii. 12, between Elim and Dophkah; and Jerome remarks: "We must not forget, that the whole deserted tract to Mount Sinai is called

out of the land of Egypt. 2. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and

Sin, and that, besides, one particular place in that region might also have received the same name, just as Moab is the name both of a town and a province."—According to the list of the stations in Num. xxxiii. 10, 11, the Israelites, before arriving in the desert of Sin, encamped also "at the Red Sea." This alludes probably to the valley Taybe, through which the road of caravans passes from Wadi Gharendel to Mount Sinai, and which opens to the Red Sea. But that station is here omitted, as generally all those places, where no remarkable event happened. For in general, although with some important exceptions, exists, as already ancient commentators have observed, between the historical narrative and the list in Num. xxiii., a relation like that between a book of travels and a map: the latter contains the names of all places which are touched on the way, whilst the former mentions those only which offer an opportunity for interesting remarks or observations.—Tradition believes that the Israelites arrived in Sin on a Sabbath.

2. After the people had wandered a whole month through barren districts, the stores, which they might have brought with them from Egypt, must have been exhausted, especially as no doubt a great part of their cattle had perished on the march from thirst and want of proper food (see xvii. 3). So was then the enormous host of people of more than two millions of souls left under a scorching sky, in a vast, solitary wilderness, uncheered by any reasonable hope of supporting themselves, but for a short time, in this dreadful region. And when was the end of their wanderings to be expected? whither should they turn? which people should they, with arms in their hands, force to grant them abodes? what was, therefore, under such circumstances, more natural, than that the people, still fluctuating and wavering in their belief, murmured with despondency and despair against Moses

and Aaron, their leaders, reproaching them, that they had, without charge or sanction from the God of their ancestors, but induced by their own temerity or ambition, torn them from their comparatively easy and agreeable life in Egypt, where they enjoyed at least an abundance of meat and bread, and had led them away to suffer a dreadful death of starvation in the pathless desert. "We remember," they said, "the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick." And who can deny that, on merely human considerations, the arguments of the people were well grounded? And our sympathies will incline still stronger to the people, if we consider, that they were doomed to forty years' wanderings in a wilderness, in which at present, in its whole extent, scarcely 6000 souls can find a scanty subsistence. So observes, among numerous other writers, the modern traveller, R. Pringle: "The whole of our route lay through the country traversed by the Israelites on their way from the Red Sea to Mount Sinai, and enabled us to form a very complete notion of that part of Arabia Petraea, which must either have greatly altered in character from what it used to be, or such a multitude as composed the host of Israel could have been sustained only by a succession of the most stupendous miracles, as indeed the Scriptures give us reason to believe they were."

This question has justly engaged the attention of almost all antiquaries; for already in the second year after the exodus, the Israelites counted 603,550 males above twenty years, and 22,000 Levites above one month (Num. ii. 32; iii. 39); and where did this constantly increasing multitude find their food in the desert, besides other tribes inhabiting those regions? It is as easy as it is inadmissible, to cut off the whole problem, with Göthe, Bohlen, and others, by the

Aaron in the wilderness. 3. And the children of Israel said to them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the

groundless supposition, which is perfectly at variance with the repeated assertions of the text (Num. xiv. 33, 34; xxxiii. 38; Deut. viii. 2), that the sojourn of the Israelites in the Arabian desert is to be reduced from forty to about two years. In order to make this conjecture more plausible, Göthe asserts among other arguments: that in the list of the stations in Num. xxxiii. between Hazereth (ver. 17) and Kadesh, or Sin (Num. xii. 16), eighteen fictitious places have been inserted, which the Israelites never passed. He continues: "Now the interpolated stations stand with the superfluous years in a happy fabulous relation. For eighteen places, about which we know nothing, and thirty-eight years about which we learn nothing, give the best opportunity, to go astray in the wilderness with the children of Israel" (compare on xiii. 17). By such arbitrary proceeding not only the whole chronology of the Hebrew history would be brought into confusion, but the difficulty would, essentially, only be diminished, not removed. For even to live *two* years in the desert with such a host is a problem beset by almost all the difficulties of the original question. It cannot surprise us, that so little is reported about the journeys between the second and the fortieth year, as the Israelites wandered from district to district without coming into contact with hostile tribes, or encountering other remarkable incidents. But the following circumstances may serve to obviate the objections: 1st. By far the greater part of the period of forty years (namely thirty-six years), the Israelites lived near the populous Mount Seir and the Red Sea, where they could not fail to come into commerce with rich nations and tribes, which provided them easily with all the necessities of subsistence: 2nd. Nearly a whole year the Israelites encamped in the fertile region around the Sinai (Numb. x. 12; compare p. 47),

where the air is pure and refreshing, where fountains abound, the vegetation is luxurious, and a variety of game is found (see Numb. xi. 31): 3rd. Even the nomadic Bedouins are still now in the habit of cultivating the districts which appear suitable for agriculture, they live, during this time, in tents, and change their abodes after every harvest; thus several tribes may be met with, even now, which are, at the same time nomads and agriculturists; and nothing forbids us to suppose the same practice among the Israelites, during their sojourn in the desert, especially as some parts of the peninsula are extremely inviting for agriculture: 4th. The Israelites brought numerous herds and flocks with them from Egypt (Exod. xii. 38; xxxvii. 3), which furnished them clothes and food of various kinds (Deut. viii. 4; xxix. 4); it is natural to assume that they did not neglect the breeding of cattle on their journeys, and even the Biblical narrative leads us to suppose, that especially the three tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh, remained faithful to their former occupations, and, as proprietors of large flocks and herds, requested Moses to allot them, as their inheritance, the rich districts in the east of the Jordan, with their fertile pastures (Numb. xxxii. 1, *et seq.*; xxxiv. 14): 5th. The Israelites had no want of gold and silver, and other precious property, to buy from the commercial caravans which traversed the desert, or from the neighbouring nations, many necessities, especially corn; a fact which is clearly alluded to in Deut. ii. 6: 6th. It is universally acknowledged, that Arabia Petraea was, formerly, considerably richer, and could maintain many more souls than is the case in its present neglected state. Various circumstances may contribute to the gradual deterioration of a country, and Arabia Petraea is not the only district in which such unfavourable change has taken place: 7th.

flesh-pots, *and* when we did eat bread to satisfaction; for you have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.—4. Then said the Lord to

The tribes may, either singly, or in a united body, have made excursions from Kadesh for the purpose of procuring provisions: 8th. It is well known, that the inhabitants of those climates require comparatively but little food for their subsistence and the support of their physical strength: 9th. It sufficed perfectly, if the Israelites were but scantily provided with the most necessary wants; abundance or superfluity would have led them away from their great aim, the conquest of Canaan, especially after so long wanderings, whilst the scarcity of their subsistence kept their longing after better and permanent abodes uninterruptedly alive (see Deuter. xxix. 5): Lastly, if all these natural circumstances combined should not be deemed sufficient to account for the sojourn of the Israelites in the desert during forty years, the holy text informs us of the constant supply of manna, a nutritious and agreeable food, with which they were abundantly furnished during that whole period. And, in this sense we read in Deut. ii. 7: "The Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand; He knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness; these forty years the Lord hath been with thee; thou hast lacked nothing" comp. Deut. xxix. 4.—Ebn Ezra observes, that a gradual increase is observable in the discontent in the Israelites; at Marah, only a part of the people had murmured; in Sin, the whole community; at the former place, against Moses only, at the latter, against both Moses and Aaron; there only for water, here for all other necessities also, as bread and meat.

3. *Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt.* To die "by the hand of God," signifies, in old age, and by a natural death, not by famine, as Rashbam correctly explains; others (as *Rosenmüller*) refer it more artificially to the plagues of Egypt, especially the last, the death of the first-

born, by which they wished to have likewise been destroyed. The Israelites complained of want of meat, although they possessed much cattle (x. 26); but they could not venture to kill them in great numbers, as they would have deprived themselves of their milk, an article of the greatest importance for their subsistence.—*Bread* is here to be understood as *food* in general. In this general meaning, it is also to be taken in ver. 4 (see note on ver. 8). This extended use of the word *bread* may have originated in the fact, that this food forms, in Asia, often the exclusive sustenance of the nomads for many successive months.—*To kill this whole assembly with hunger*, that is, the *consequence* of the inconsiderate journey into the desert, to which Moses and Aaron had, as they said, persuaded them, without the command of God, would be their death in the wilderness, although this might not have been their *intention*; compare Gen. xviii. 5.

4. In this, and the following verse, as also in vers. 14, 15, and in Numb. xi. 7—9, the descending of the manna is mentioned in a way which shows, beyond doubt, that here also a miraculous event is narrated. (About the *quails*, see on ver. 13). If we compare, and combine the different notices of the Bible concerning the nature of the manna, we ascertain the following points: 1st. It falls from the air (ver. 4): 2nd. It descends daily (with the exception of the Sabbath): 3rd. It comes down simultaneously, or nearly so, with the dew, like which it covers the earth (ver. 14): 4th. It is *thin*, like a scale, or *fine*, like the hoar-frost on the earth (*ibid.*): 6th. It melts, if the sun shines upon it (ver. 21): 7th. It breeds maggots if preserved to the following day (verse 20): 8th. It is white, like coriander seed (ver. 31), or like bdellium (Num. xi. 7): 9th. Its taste is "like cake with honey" (ver. 31), or like "olive-cake" (Numb.

Moses, Behold, I shall rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather ¹every day what is

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—A certain rate every day.

xi. 8): 10th. It can be ground in mills, or beaten in mortars, or baked in pans, and prepared for cakes (*Numb. loc. cit.*): and, 11th. It served the Israelites as their ordinary food during their forty years' wanderings in the desert (ver. 15).

If we compare all these circumstances with the very numerous and very detailed accounts of ancient and modern travellers, it appears evident, that the Biblical text mentions *two* sorts of manna, which have a different origin, and are in many respects distinct from each other. For that manna, which "is ground in mills or beaten in mortars," cannot be identical with that, which is white like coriander seed, and melts by the rays of the sun. We may call the one kind the manna of the air, the other, the manna of the trees and shrubs. We shall first introduce some accounts on the first species. Aristotle already observes (*Hist. Nat. v. 22*), "Honey falls from the air, especially at the time of the rise of the great orbs, and when the rain-bow disappears; but not before the rise of the Pleiads"; which is the case about the vernal equinox, whence the Romans call them *Vergiliæ*. Pliny (*Hist. Nat. xi. 12*), writes, "From the rise of the Pleiads, honey falls from the air, towards the dawn of the day. Then the foliage of the trees is found covered with that substance, and those who are early in the free air feel their clothes as if oiled and their hair glutinous." Avicenna (p. 212 of the Arabic text) describes the manna thus: "It is a dew, which falls upon stones or plants, has a sweet taste, becomes thick like honey, or concreted into small granular masses." And in another passage (p. 233), he speaks of a sort of honey-dew, similar to an ascending vapour, which receives in the air some natural preparation, and falls down in the night upon trees and stones, and has resemblance to honey. These observations have been fully confirmed by many travellers in the East; so, for

instance, by Fabri, Shaw, Forskal, and others. About the manna of Arabia Petrea, the following passage in the travels of Breitenbach (i. p. 49) offers the best illustration: "It falls in the neighbourhood of Mount Sinai, in August and September; resembles, when fresh, the hoar-frost or the dew, and hangs in drops on leaves, herbs, boughs, and stones. When it is gathered, it curdles like pitch, but melts before the fire, and by the heat of the sun. In taste, it resembles the honey, and sticks in the teeth when it is eaten." Fabri compares it with the coriander seed; and Eurmann states, that its colour is similar to that of the snow, which appearance it keeps, if it falls on stones and boughs, but that it must be gathered before sun-rise; for it melts if exposed to the sun. We need scarcely point out, that this *air-manna* coincides in many, and in the most characteristic, features, with the properties which the Biblical text ascribes to the manna. To explain the formation of manna, no doubt a remarkable phenomenon, Oedman (*Miscell. Collect. iv. p. 7*) observes, "We may represent to ourselves, that the great heat in Arabia presses a great quantity of sweet juice from the trees and shrubs which grow there [see *infra*], especially from the *Algul*, from different sorts of *Rhamnus*, from the date-groves, etc., that these vapours fly in the air or rise, as long as they are specifically lighter than the atmosphere, but that they condense themselves by the coolness of the night, till, by the law of gravitation, they fall down with the dew, or rather compose with it one common substance. If they descend in a greater quantity, they must naturally form themselves into a sticky honey-like mass, which assumes still greater compactness by the frost of the night. If, after the fall of the dew, the watery parts of this glutinous dew evaporate, the sweet and heavy manna-substance remains, like hoar-frost or sugar;

sufficient for the day, that I may try them, whether they will walk in my law or not. 5. And it shall come to pass,

but when the rays of the sun begin to shine with greater force, these grains also melt."

This is, no doubt, a clear and acceptable theory; but it explains in no way the fact, that the manna was ground, and beaten, and cooked. In order to account for this, we are obliged to consider the *second* species of manna more minutely. There are some trees in the south of Europe and in the East, from which oozes a resinous, sweet, whitish juice, either spontaneously or by the puncture of a certain insect, which Ehrenberg calls *Coccus manniparus*. Some sorts of this manna are imported into our countries also, mostly from Calabria and Sicily, in dried grains, and are frequently applied for pharmaceutical purposes, especially as a laxative. The trees which contain this substance are, among others, the *Ornus Europea* and *Fraxinus rotundifolia* (in Sicily, and Italy), *Alhagi* (frequent in the East, chiefly in two species, *A. maurorum* and *A. desertorum*); *Tamarix mannifera* (called by the Arabs, Guz, and Tarafa); the Gharb or Garrab (which yields the Beiruk honey, in the valley of the Jordan); the Gundeleh (which produces the Sheer-khisht manna, in Candahar); *Calotropis procera* (which exudes the Shukar-al-ashur); Ballot or Afs (in Mesopotamia). Before we describe some of these plants, and that insect, more in detail, we insert the following passage from Niebuhr's Description of Arabia (p. 145), in order to explain the grinding of the manna: "The manna-harvest falls, in Merdin (in Mesopotamia), in the month of August, or, as others say, in July. Observers have, after a thick fog, or if other vapours fill the atmosphere, noticed a greater quantity of it on the leaves of the trees, than when the air is pure. These trees (called Ballot, Afs, Elmaes, Elmahleb, etc., belonging, probably, to the oak family), are not particularly cultivated or attended to;

but when the manna falls, every one, who wishes it, is permitted to go into the forest and take as much of it as he likes, without requiring any special permission from the government or private persons. It is gathered in three different ways, and is of different quality accordingly. Some go into the forest in the morning before sun-rise, and shake the manna from the leaves upon a cloth. This manna remains quite white, and is of the most superior quality. If it is not shaken in the morning, and a warm day ensues, it melts in the heat of the sun. But it is still not quite spoiled, but accumulates on the leaves more and more, which thus grow thicker every day. Now, in order to secure this manna also, the leaves are taken home in any quantity, and thrown into boiling water, when the manna appears on its surface like oil, and can easily be taken out. But many persons do not even take that trouble, *but they beat the leaves with the manna together in mortars*; and this is the most inferior sort." The reader will easily discover the manifold parallels which this account offers with the Biblical description, and especially understand how the manna "was ground in mills, beaten in mortars, and cooked in pans."

The shrub, from which this manna is usually obtained in Asia, is the *Alhagi* (called by the Arabs "Camel's Horn"). It grows almost throughout the whole Orient, in Arabia Petraea, but especially between Sinai and Tor; it is of middle height, has lancet-like, blunt leaves, and blossoms of half an inch in length. From these come out glutinous legumina one inch long, which contain reddish-brown, bitter seeds. The manna of *Alhagi maurorum* is employed as a substitute for sugar, and is from Persia, where this tree grows most abundantly, exported to India; it is in Persian and Arabian works called Terendshabin.—The Tarafa is an evergreen tamarisk with

that on the sixth day, if they will prepare *that* which they bring in, it shall be double of *that* which they gather daily.

6. And Moses and Aaron said to all the children of

thorny legumina, which grows in great abundance in Wadi esh-Sheikh (see on ver. 1); but although the tamarisk is very frequent in Nubia, throughout Arabia, on the Euphrates, on the Astaboras, and in different other valleys of Asia, it seems, according to Burckhardt's testimony, that it produces manna almost exclusively in the region of Mount Sinai. Now from these plants the manna exudes either as a vegetable juice spontaneously, or by incisions or fissures, or by means of that small insect coccus, above alluded to, which scratches the boughs with its sting, and thus causes the resinous fluid to trickle out.—The coccus manniparus is an unwinged insect, about one or two lines long, bluntly cuneiform, yellow, hairy at the upper part, and chequered, with twelve ringlets on the body, feelers of nine links, six four-linked feet, and small, indistinct eyes.

From all this it is evident, that the holy text speaks both of the air-manna and of the tree-manna, since only the qualities of both sorts combined yield all the characteristics of the Biblical manna. At the same time, it is not only not impossible, but even probable, that the vegetable or tree-manna is frequently carried away by the air, and falls again to the ground like dew, so that in the end both kinds of manna coincide in their origin.—However, although the manna of our text has thus many qualities in common with the natural character of that substance; and thus proves anew, that God applies *natural* means for His great deeds (as in the plagues of Egypt, the passage over the Red Sea, the change of the bitter waters of Marah, and in many other instances); it is yet obvious, that here a *miracle* is narrated, from the following points: 1. The manna of the Israelites falls uninterruptedly through forty years at all seasons, whilst in reality it is only found during two or three months in the year, and in some years not at all. 2. It

descends in such quantities, that the whole people of Israel is supplied with it, whereas, according to authentic reports, even in the most abundant years, the whole peninsula of Sinai yields scarcely 600 to 700 pounds, and in ordinary years not more than the third part of this quantity.

3. It serves as the usual, nutritious and satisfying food, whilst it is in fact only a medical, relaxing substance, and would, if taken for any length of time, lead to the dissolution of the body, although it may be applied to *sweeten* the meals; nor do the Arabians use it now as an article of food. 4. It falls on the sixth day in double quantities, and on the seventh not at all. 5. It breeds worms, if it is preserved to the following day, whilst that kept from the sixth to the seventh day remains sweet and wholesome. 6. It is to the Israelites perfectly unknown, and causes their astonishment (ver. 15), and an omer full of it is preserved (ver. 32), that the posterity might see the miraculous bread of their ancestors; and in the same sense it is called a food, which their fathers had never known (Deut. viii. 3). As such miraculous bread the manna is mentioned throughout the Old Testament; it is called "celestial bread" (Psalms, cv. 40); or similarly: "heavenly food" (Ps. lxxviii. 24, although the Arabians call it also "heavenly gift"); and in Ps. lxxviii. 4 it is enumerated among the wonders, which God did for Israel (compare Nehem. ix. 20). About the name see on ver. 15.—As the reason, why so unsubstantial a food was chosen as the chief means of subsistence of the Israelites for so long a period, is mentioned in Deut. viii. 3, that Israel may learn, "that man does not live by bread alone, but by everything which the word of God produces"; that, therefore, God may apply whatever means He pleases to maintain His creatures. And thus the sacred text itself alludes to the higher typical meaning which the manna is intended to convey,

Israel, In the evening, then you shall know that the Lord hath brought you out from the land of Egypt: 7. And in the morning, then you shall see the glory of the Lord;

and invites to a symbolical interpretation. The providence of God manifests itself chiefly in supporting all the numberless beings which people the universe. He gives to everybody his food in due time; but because He sends it through agents and messengers, man is apt to forget that it proceeds from Him, who is the source of everything created; because He conceals Himself in the veil of nature or natural events, man is prone to ascribe his daily support to this concatenation of external occurrences, and to speak himself free from every duty of gratitude towards Providence. But in order to teach the released people immediately after its entrance into the inhospitable and barren desert, that great truth that He alone is the bestower of all earthly gifts, that the maintenance of every individual is in reality one uninterrupted series of miracles, and that He may use any medium, however insignificant in appearance, to maintain His creatures; God applied the light food of the manna to remind them every day anew of His watching Providence, of His goodness and His omnipotence; and He thus prepared them practically to comprehend the first and fundamental doctrine of every true and pure religion.—We abstain from further allegorical applications, in which many commentators, tempted by the fruitfulness of the subject, have extensively and often vainly indulged.

God will *try* the Israelites by the manna, and see, whether they would indeed, with contentment and confidence, gather *every day only as much as was necessary for them*, nor leave anything to the following day (ver. 19), or whether they would feel tempted to go out on Sabbath also to gather (ver. 26); in a word, whether they would *walk in the law* and follow the command of the Lord.

5. On the sixth day after the first supply of the manna, they shall examine that which they bring home, and they will

find that they have gathered *double* the quantity of that which they have collected on the previous days, that is two omers (ver. 22).

6, 7. The following words of Moses have a deeper background. After the deliverance at the Red Sea, the Israelites had learned to identify the cause of God with that of Moses, and to look upon the latter as the true messenger of the former (xiv. 31). In the privations which they had already suffered since that event, they felt an inducement to separate again the guidance of Moses from the providence of God, who, they believed, would lead them, without trouble or vexation, into a happy country. They murmured, therefore, against Moses (ver. 2), without, however, disowning God's power (ver. 3). It is, therefore, the intention of Moses, to prove to the Israelites again, that God is the immediate ruler of their destinies, and that he himself, and Aaron, are but His feeble instruments. Although the brothers lost thus in worldly greatness, they rose high in heavenly dignity, and the cause of Israel appeared again as thoroughly divine. This murmuring of the people, which is thus not directed against Moses, but against God Himself, assumes a still more criminal character. The proof of that truth shall now be more openly displayed, by the miraculous supply of quails in the evening, and of manna in the morning, and the glory of God will manifest itself to the disheartened hosts.—*The glory of the Lord*, that is, His might, to give you, even in this wilderness, unexpectedly your sustenance (compare xiv. 17; Numb. xiv. 22), whilst in ver. 10, the same expression signifies the deity in its supernatural splendour, which manifests itself to the mortal eye.—*What are we*, namely, able or capable to perform? We execute only that which God bids us to do.

8. This verse is closely to be combined with the preceding one, which it is in-

¹when He heareth your murmurings against the Lord: and what *are* we, that you murmur against us? 8. And Moses said, *This shall be*, when the Lord will give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to satisfaction; when the Lord heareth your murmurings which you murmur against Him: and what *are* we? Your murmurings *are* not against us, but against the Lord.—9. And Moses spoke to Aaron, Say to all the congregation of the children of Israel, Approach before the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—For that he.

tended to illustrate; at the same time it represents a former idea in a new light, and the logical connection is this: when God will send you food in the evening and in the morning, His glory will impress itself upon your minds; at the same time, the nature of that food, and the manner in which you will obtain it, will be a new proof that not *we* (Moses and Aaron), in our weakness, but God in His omnipotence and wisdom, has led you from Egypt, and so your murmuring against me falls back upon *Him*. In our verse, *meat* and *bread* appear really to be used in their usual and more limited meaning, whilst in ver. 3, *bread* is applied as the generic, and *meat* as the specific notion, so that the literal reference to ver. 3, which has, by some interpreters, been found in our verse, is but in appearance.—The order of the verses of this chapter has been attacked, especially from the circumstance, that in ver. 4, the manna alone seems to be promised, whilst here the animal food also is mentioned, wherefore, some propose to place vers. 11, 12 immediately after ver. 3. However, the whole difficulty disappears if we take in ver. 4 also, *bread* in its wider sense, as food in general, so that it comprises the promise of the quails also, and the progress of the narrative is therefore this: promise of God to Moses and Aaron concerning the manna and the quails, vers. 4, 5; then announcement of this promise to the people through the brothers, vers. 6—9; and, lastly, its ratification by a divine apparition, on which

solemn occasion God repeats, to *Moses alone*, His previous assurance, verses 10—12; so that the economy of this section is perfectly logical.

9, 10. The pillar of the cloud, which, during the day, passed constantly before the army of the Israelites (xiii. 22), was to them the visible sign of divine guidance, and now, when a new extraordinary miracle, clearly announced, was to be granted and confirmed to them, they are very appropriately and impressively requested to rally round that sacred symbol, in order to accept, as it were, from God Himself, the certainty of the promise. But the pillar of the cloud was, as the Israelites had alienated themselves from their God by their murmuring, “farther before them in the desert,” and they “approached” it now (ver. 9), or they “turned” towards it (ver. 10), and saw the majesty of God in the cloud (see on ver. 7).

11, 12. According to Ebn Ezra, this is a second revelation of God to Moses, which was granted to him on the same subject, as an acknowledgment of the reverential spirit with which the Israelites looked upon the glory of God appearing to them. However, it seems rather, that the promise of the miraculous food is here repeated to Moses alone, in the presence of the people, because he was properly the medium between Him and the people.

13. Our verse relates to the first kind of food with which the Israelites were supplied, the *quails* (*selav*). The exact species of birds, designated by the name

Lord; for He hath heard your murmurings. 10. And it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they ²turned towards the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.—11. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 12. I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak to them, saying, ³Towards the evening you shall be satisfied with bread, and you shall know that I *am* the Lord your God. 13. And it came to pass, that

² *Engl. Vers.*—Looked.

³ At even.

selav, has been a long-disputed question, which is, however, at present almost settled. Partly the comparison with the kindred dialects, partly the circumstance that *selav* is, in Psalm lxxiii. 27, called “a winged bird,” have assisted in clearing up this subject. The latter designation would by no means apply to *locusts*, which Ludolph, Patrick, and others, believe to be meant by *selav*. Nor is the “flying-fish” (*Trigla Israelitarum*, *Ehrenberg*) more adapted to our text; they can hardly cover the whole camp; they do not move far from the coast; nor can they serve as an ordinary food, but are only applied to certain medical preparations. Now, in Arabic, the same word signifies *quail*; and so Josephus calls the bird here mentioned; he alludes to the event of our text in the following manner (*Antiq. III. i. 5*): “A little later, a vast number of quails, which is a bird more plentiful in this Arabian Gulf than anywhere else, came flying over the sea; and, wearied about the laborious flight, and coming nearer to the earth than other birds, they fell down upon the Hebrews. And they caught them and satisfied their hunger with them, convinced that God had supplied them with this food.” Both ancient and modern geographers agree about the abundance of quails in those regions. So says Diodorus Siculus: “The inhabitants (of Arabia Petraea) prepared long nets, spread them near the coast for many stadia, and caught thus a great number of quails, which come hither in large troops from the sea.” Similarly,

Prosper Alpinus, Hasselquist, Shaw, and others. Besides the common quail (*Tetrao coturnix*, *cot. dactylisonans*), in those parts another large species is found, which the Arabians call *kata*, and, in the system of Linnæus, bears the name *Tetrao (Israelitarum) Alchata*. It abounds in Arabia Petraea, Judæa, and the former territories of Edom and Moab, where it is, especially in May and June, the season of our event, found in enormous numbers. It is of the size of a turtle-dove; has a short, curved, yellow bill, marked with a white spot at the end; ash-grey neck and head; reddish body and back; cuneiform tail; and feathered legs; and must, therefore, properly, be ranged among the grouse family. The Septuagint renders *selav* by “quailing” (*roi de cailles*, or, properly, mother of quails, that is, large quail), and which is said to lead the migrations of the quails (*Plin., Nat. Hist. x. 33*). Thus it is interpreted by Philo, and others also. Although this bird belongs, according to accurate observations, to another family, that of the “*Rallus*,” it is so similar to the quail, that it rather confirms this acceptance. The opinion of Targum Jonathan, who understood by *selav* pheasants, requires no refutation.—*And covered the camp.* According to Numb. xi. 31, the quails (like the locusts, x. 13) are “brought by a wind from the sea,” and they are scattered over the camp, “a day’s journey on this side, and a day’s journey on the other side, and two cubits high upon the face of the earth.” In *Psa. lxxviii. 26, 27*, the same

in the evening the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the 'camp. 14. And when the dew which lay had risen, behold, there was upon the face of the desert ²something small, pealed, as small as the hoar-frost on the earth. 15. And when the children of Israel saw *it*, they said one to another, ³What *is* that? For they knew not what it *was*. And Moses said to them, This *is* the bread which the Lord hath given you for food.—16. This *is* the thing which

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Host.

² A small round thing, as small, etc.

³ It is manna.

event is thus described: "He [God] caused an east-wind to blow in the heaven: and by His power He brought in the south-wind. He raised flesh upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like the sand of the sea." And Buffon (*Hist. Nat.* iii. 1) observes, with regard hereto, "We see, even, that the Creator of the Universe employed this means (the wind), as that most in conformity with the general laws established by Himself, for sending vast numbers of quails to the Israelites in the desert. 'This south-east wind blows, indeed, in Egypt, in Ethiopia, on the coasts of the Red Sea, and, in a word, in all those regions where the quails abound.' However, the miraculous character of this event must be sought, both in the unusual abundance of those birds, and in their arrival just at the time when the Hebrew camp was nearly despairing, and when such an event was, naturally, the least to be expected.—Now, in the morning was around the camp "a layer of dew," that is, the dew had already fallen in the morning, and covered the ground.

14. And when that layer of dew which covered the earth had risen and evaporated, the thin white manna, which had fallen almost simultaneously with the dew was seen upon the ground (*Numb.* xi. 9). According to Rashi, and others, first dew had fallen, then manna over the dew, and then dew again over the manna, so that the manna was enclosed between two layers of dew, as in a capsule. We need scarcely remark, that the text offers no hint to such conception.

15. About the nature, and the different sorts of the manna, see on ver. 4. The Israelites, seeing the ground covered with it, exclaim: *man-hu*, which words, if they are combined with the explanation immediately following: "for they did not know *what* it was," evidently signify: "What is that?" Thus translate the Septuagint, the Syriac Version, and the Vulgate. Josephus (*Antiq.* III. i. 16) writes: "Now the Hebrews call this food *manna*, for the word *man*, is, in our language, a question, *What is this?*" And the substance preserved the name by which it was first introduced; and already in ver. 33, an omer of *manna* is mentioned (see also ver. 35). Webster (*Dictionary*, s. v.) compares *Manna* with the similar Arabic word, provisions for a journey, and with the Irish *mann*, which signifies wheat, bread, or food; but he defends the rendering of the English Version: "it is manna," which would make this whole verse singularly contradictory; for the Hebrews could not call it by a certain name, if "they knew not what it was." Evidently to obviate such objection, Faber explains: "The Israelites asked, 'Is this manna?' for they knew the name, without having ever seen the object itself." But it is clear, that this is no successful attempt to bring the different parts of our verse into harmony with each other. It is neither grammatically nor logically unforced. The same must be said of another interpretation adopted by several commentators, that

the Lord hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every head, *according* to the number of your persons; take every man for those who are in his tent. 17. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered; *those who gathered more, and those who gathered less.* 18. And when they did mete *it* with an omer, he who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating. 19. And Moses said, Let no man

⁴ *Engl. Vers.*—Some more, some less.

the Israelites believed the food, which lay spread before them, to be identical with the natural manna, which was known to them, and that, therefore, Moses, correcting their mistake, informed them, in the following words, that it was *heavenly* food.

16. Every individual was to gather one omer. The measures in use among the ancient Hebrews, for *dry* goods, were: 1st. the *homer*, containing ten *baths*. The bath (which is, however, only used for liquids), is, according to Josephus, equal to seventy-two *xestæ*, that is, one Attic metretres; and this holds, according to Böckh, 1993·95 Parisian cubic inches. But, according to the Rabbins, one *log* is equal to six hen's eggs of middle size, probably not the shells, but only the contents of the eggs. Now, a *log* is the seventy-second part of a bath, for a bath contains six *hins*, and a *hin*, twelve *logs*, therefore the *bath* holds 1014·39 Parisian cubic inches; which amount agrees better with the different passages of the Bible than the larger one stated above: 2nd. The *Lethech*, which is, according to the Septuagint, and the Vulgate, half a *homer*: 3rd. The *ephah*, the tenth part of the *homer*, and is, therefore, the same measure as the *bath* is for liquids: 4th. The *seah*, according to the Septuagint and the Rabbins, the third part of the *ephah*: 5th. The *omer*, which is, as appears from the 36th verse of our chapter, the tenth part of the *ephah*, wherefore it is frequently called a *tenth deal* (Levit. xiv. 10; Numb. xv. 4); and,

6th. The *kab* (2 Kings vi. 25), according to the Rabbins, the sixth part of the *seah*, or four *xestæ*: therefore the *homer* is the greatest, the *log*, the smallest measure, and their relation to those which lie between them is as follows: 1 *homer* is equal to 10 *baths* or *ephahs*, 30 *seahs*, 60 *hins*, 100 *omers*, 180 *kabs*, 720 *logs*. Now, as a *log* contains as much as six eggs, the *ephah* (or *bath*) contains $6 \times 72 = 432$ eggs, and therefore is an omer equal to $43\frac{1}{2}$ eggs (or about four pints, English); see on ver. 36. It can be gathered, from several passages of the Mishnah and the Talmud, that the measures were, in later times, enlarged, although their proportion to each other remained unaltered.

18. The miraculous and heaven-sent food showed itself wonderful in all its relations. Everybody gathered the manna after his abilities or his judgment, and when he returned to his tent, and measured what he had gathered, he who had little, found yet that he had for every member of his family not less than an omer, and he who brought home much, saw that he had not gathered more than one omer for every individual of his house; or, whether they had individually gathered much or little, yet when they came home, put together, and then shared what they had gathered, they found, that there was for every one not more, and not less than an omer.

19. In order to remind the Israelites daily anew of the unremitting providence of God, they should leave nothing of their manna till the following morning,

leave of it till the morning. 20. Notwithstanding they hearkened not to Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it ¹became putrid with worms, and smelled offensively: and Moses was angry with them. 21. And they gathered it every morning, *every* man according to his eating; and when the sun grew hot, it melted. 22. And it came to pass, *that* on the sixth day they gathered double bread, two omers for one *man*: and all the chiefs of the congregation came and told *it* to Moses. 23. And he said to them, This *is that* which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is ²a day of rest, a holy rest to the Lord: bake *that* which you will bake *to-day*, and seethe that which you will seethe; and that which remaineth

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Bred worms.

² The rest of the holy Sabbath unto.

or what was left destroy, firmly relying that God would provide them every day with their necessary sustenance.

21. That both the tree-manna, and the air-manna melt, or at least curdle when the sun shines upon it, is confirmed by all travellers (see on ver. 4).

22. The sense of this verse is easily discernible from the context: God had already, at the first announcement of the manna, in ver. 5, communicated to Moses that the Israelites, when preparing, that is, measuring the quantity brought home, would find, that they had gathered double the usual quantity. It is to be supposed that Moses informed the people of this circumstance, although our text does not relate it, and there are numerous instances, that God gave commands to Moses, without their communication to the people being mentioned; and this supposition is in our case confirmed by the first part of the following verse, from which the acquaintance of the Israelites with the precepts concerning the Sabbath is clearly obvious: "That is that, which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is a day of rest, holy rest to the Lord."—Now that prediction was, indeed, found realized on the sixth day; they saw that they had gathered a double measure of manna; and, therefore, the representatives of the congregation went to Moses to inform

him of the fact, and to enquire, how they should act after such a remarkable occurrence, upon which Moses answered: "Bake that, which you will bake," etc. (ver. 23); and especially to ascertain, whether that manna, which they would leave to the following morning, would remain eatable, to which Moses replied: "and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning."—Rashi is of opinion, that Moses had forgotten to acquaint the Israelites of the laws concerning the Sabbath, which is, however, by no means probable; and Ebn Ezra believes, with as little plausibility, that Moses had simply commanded them to gather on the sixth day double portions, without, however, assigning any reason for this injunction.—According to tradition, the manna for the Sabbath was, in smell and taste, superior to that gathered on the other days.—The "chiefs of the congregation" are probably the same, who are in xii. 21; xvii. 5, called the elders.

23. We find here already a short allusion to the institution of Sabbath, which is, next to the Passover, the second great national *sign of covenant*, between God and Israel. Before this period, the Israelites did probably not observe this day as a time of rest and recreation. But the occasion on which

over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. 24. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses commanded: and it did not smell offensively, nor was there any worm therein. 25. And Moses said, Eat that to-day; for to-day is a Sabbath to the Lord: to-day you will not find it in the field. 26. Six days you shall gather it; but on the seventh day, *which is* the Sabbath, in it there shall be none.—27. And it came to pass, *that* there went out *some* of the people on the seventh day to gather, and they found none. 28. And the Lord said to Moses, How long do you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? 29. See, that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath; therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread of

it is here introduced is admirably calculated to disclose the internal end of the Sabbath, which is the perfect harmonizing and reconciling of the material and spiritual life of man. Now, the minds of the Israelites were in the desert of Sin, entirely engrossed by cares and thoughts for physical subsistence. The mentioning of the Sabbath, was, therefore, intended to call their exclusive attention away from earth, and to direct it, for a day at least, to heaven, lest the people, absorbed in external pursuits, forget the true task of their lives, and in prosecuting the means lose the aim. (See our remarks on xx. 8—11).—"That which you are accustomed to bake and to seethe every day, namely, one omer, that you shall bake and seethe to-day also; but the remaining omer preserve till to-morrow," explains Ebn Ezra, perhaps too literally urging the words of the command. Nor is the interpretation of Onkelos and Rashi more plausible: "bake and seethe both omers together for to-day and to-morrow"; for if so, it would not be in any way remarkable or miraculous, that the manna did, on Sabbath, not go over into putrefaction (ver. 24).

26. Here the law of Sabbath concerning the manna is generalized.

28. Moses is addressed instead, and in the name of the whole people; and the

rebuke here expressed by God does not apply to him personally.

29. God shows in a most obvious manner His wish to see the Sabbath consecrated, by His sending double food on the sixth day.—*Abide you every man in his place*, that is, do not go out with the intention to gather manna; this literal meaning has already been adopted by Rashi. But rabbinical tradition has, from these words, deduced the prohibition, that no Israelite shall go farther than 2000 yards, that is 6 stadia, or 750 Roman paces, from the place of his abode ("the Sabbath-way," Acts i. 12); for that was the distance of the holy tabernacle from the remotest part of the Hebrew camp.—Although the law about the Sabbath-way is not distinctly stated in the legislation, it is certainly in accordance with the spirit and character of the Sabbath. Travelling interrupts the rest both of the men and the beasts, and was therefore to be avoided. From the same reasons unnecessary military marches were interdicted on Sabbath (see on xx. 8—11). However, promenading for the sake of recreation, and, even distant, visits to prophets or other public teachers and houses of divine worship, seem not to have been forbidden; and even riding was, for the latter purpose, not unusual (see 2 Kings iv. 23).

two days; abide you every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. 30. So the people rested on the seventh day. 31. And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it *was* like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it *was* like ¹cake *made* with honey.—32. And Moses said, This *is* the thing which the Lord commandeth: Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread which I have

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Wafers.

30. The people followed the divine injunction concerning the Sabbath, and nobody went out to seek manna.

31. The manna is compared with *coriander seed*. The *coriandrum sativum* is frequently found in Egypt, Persia and India, has a round, tall stalk, the lower leaves are simply feathered, and toothed; the upper ones are smaller, doubly feathered, and pointed; it bears umbelliferous white or reddish flowers, from which arise globular greyish-coloured, spicy, hollow seed-corns, the surface marked with fine striae; they are in Egypt exclusively employed as a spice in meat and other food. It is, at present, also much cultivated in the south of Europe, and in this country, as its seeds are used by confectioners and druggists, and its leaves are employed as an ingredient for different kinds of dishes. As, therefore, the coriander is yellowish, Rashi explains our words thus: "The manna was, with regard to the globular form, similar to the seeds of coriander, which has besides, a white colour." And similarly Kimchi: "The manna was white, and consisted of grains like those of coriander-seed." But these explanations are against the construction of the Hebrew words. In Num. xi. 7, the colour is described as that of bdellium, which is "whitish, resinous, and pellucid, nearly the colour of frankincense; when broken it appears the colour of wax."—Its taste was like *honey-cake*, or, according to Num. xi. 8, it resembled that of "an *oiled cake*;" which two designations Ebn Ezra, Rashbam, and others, reconcile by the suppo-

sition, that the manna, when falling from the air, tasted like coriander, but, when ground and cooked, like oil. However, coriander and oil are both poetical figures for a soft agreeable substance. According to the Rabbins, the manna contained ingredients of every delicious food, and had a different taste for the children, the youths, the men, and the aged, to every one according to his individual liking.

32—34. An omer of the manna was to be preserved, that the future generations might be reminded with what miraculous food God supported the Israelites in the desert—a proof that, according to the narrative of the sacred text, not the usual manna which falls every year, and which was known to everybody, is here understood. That omer was likewise intended or calculated to recall, in times of disbelief and misery, to the memory of the Israelites, God's providence and love, by exhibiting the unsubstantial food with which He satisfied so many millions through so protracted a period. — This vessel with manna was to be placed before God, or before the Testimony, which two expressions must, therefore, be identical; for "Testimony" stands here instead of the "Ark of the Covenant," which contained the two stone tablets upon which the ten commandments were engraved. The vessel with the manna, occupied thus a most significant place in the holy tabernacle. It is self-evident, from this circumstance, that this command, or at least its execution (ver. 34), cannot fall into the time of our chapter, namely, the second month after the exode,

given you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt. 33. And Moses said to Aaron, Take a vessel, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations. 34. As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the testimony, to be kept. 35. And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to ²the land which they were to inhabit; they did eat the

² *Engl. Vers.*—A land inhabited.

but considerably later, after the legislation, and the construction and erection of the tabernacle. But the historian intended to combine, in these verses, all notices relating to the manna, and, from the same consideration, the next verse (ver. 35) contains even the fact, that the Israelites were provided with manna during forty years, till they came to the borders of the promised land. Instances of a similar anticipation occur both in the Pentateuch and the historical books of the Old Testament. According to Joshua v. 10—12, the manna ceased after the transit of the Israelites over the Jordan, *after the death of Moses*, who could, therefore, have made that statement only by divine inspiration (as *Abarbanel* observes), especially as Moses knew, according to Numb. xiv. 33, that the Israelites would eat the manna for forty years. According to others, this remark has been inserted by Joshua, or by Moses, immediately before his demise. Hengstenberg explains, that our verse simply relates that the Israelites were provided with manna till they came to the inhabited districts in the *east* of the Jordan, without leading the narrative beyond the time of Moses; they eat manna till that period, which does not exclude their enjoying the same heavenly food even after that time. A similar difficulty and difference of opinion prevails in Deut. xxxiv. 5. *et seq.* where the death of Moses himself is reported.—Forty years are given as a round sum, although the manna lasted about one month less; for it commenced in the second month after the

exode (ver. 1), and ceased immediately after the first Passover which the Israelites celebrated in the west of the Jordan (Josh. v. 12).—The Septuagint, Vulgate, English Version, and many modern commentators, translate the following words thus: “until they came to a *land inhabited*.” This is at variance both with history—for the Israelites passed, long before their entrance into Canaan, through many inhabited countries, for instance, those of Sihon and Og—and with the succeeding words, which are explanatory of that statement: “until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan” (to Gilgal).

36. *Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.* The Septuagint translates: “The omer was the tenth part of three measures” (that is, seahs, $\frac{3}{10}$). Thus also Onkelos and Rashi: The omer was the third part of three seahs. Rashi continues, One *seah* is equal to 6 *kabs*, one *kab* is equal to 4 *logs*, and one *log* is equal to 6 *eggs*, so that, again, an *omer* is equal to $43\frac{1}{2}$ *eggs* (for, if a *log* is equal to 6 *eggs*, a *kab* is equal to 24, and a *seah* is equal to 144; therefore, three *seahs* are equal to 432, and the tenth part, or an *omer*, is equal to $43\frac{1}{2}$). See note on ver. 16. The Septuagint usually renders ephah by the Egyptian word *oiphi* or *oiphei*, that is, measure; and hin it translates with *ein* or *in*, which is the Egyptian name for sextarius. Ephah and hin seem therefore to have been originally Egyptian measures. The molten sea of Solomon (1 Kings vii. 23—26) contained two thousand baths; and if we compare the dimensions of this vessel

manna until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan. 36. Now an omer *is* the tenth *part* of an ephah.

(which was ten cubits in diameter, five cubits high, and in circumference thirty cubits), and if we take the cubit at fifteen inches, the "sea" contained, according to Saalschütz (Mos. R. i. p. 194—199), 1,325,358 cubic inches; and each bath or ephah was, therefore, 662½ cubic inches (or about 10½ quarts), and the omer about one quart. We shall, in due place, examine this computation. — Omer, properly sheaf, was, probably, the measure which was filled by the grains of one sheaf. But, as sheaves are of uncertain size, it is impossible to base any conjecture upon that derivation. The Mosaic law supposes the case that sheaves might be overlooked, and left in the field; for they were considerably smaller than they are in our countries, the corn being cut merely with the sickle.—Some critics have found, in the accuracy with which our text describes the quantity of the omer, a proof, that this verse cannot have been written in the time of Moses, when all those measures were so universally known. But laws are necessarily more explicit than a simple narrative; and, in order to secure uniformity and stability for the future, a

clear statement was very desirable. And, in general, accuracy in detail, especially of measures, which is a characteristic of almost all ancient writers, cannot possibly be taken as an argument against the authenticity of a passage.—Michaelis, Kanne, and Hengstenberg, are of opinion that omer is no name of a measure, but a kind of vessel or jar, which everybody carried with him, and which might therefore be used as a measure. But, granted even, that every Israelite was provided with such a utensil, it is difficult to suppose, that they were all of precisely the same size, and therefore fit to serve as a measure. Neither the analogy of the similar Arabic word, which Michaelis urges, nor the circumstance that the Pentateuch very frequently uses "tenth deal of an ephah," instead of omer (Hengstenberg), is conclusive. Notwithstanding the existence of the *crown*, as a current English coin, it is, in the common intercourse, less used than its value, *five shillings*.—The history of the manna has given rise to numerous, often very ingenious, typical and allegorical explanations. Compare, however, note on ver. 4, p. 216, 217.

CHAPTER XVII.

SUMMARY.—From Sin (Wadi esh-Sheikh) the Israelites journey on in a southern direction, till they come to Rephidim, in the vicinity of Horeb (see on ver. 1). Oppressed by want of water, the Israelites murmur against Moses, again reproaching him, to have led them rashly from their safe abodes in Egypt. But God quiets their discontent by miraculously producing abundant supplies of water from a rock in Horeb.—In Rephidim the Israelites are, for the first time, inimically encountered by any of the heathen nations; they are attacked by the Amalekites. Joshua is appointed by Moses as general; Moses himself, accompanied by Aaron and Hur, stand during the battle, visible to all, on a hill near Horeb, and after a hot combat, which protracted itself till sunset, the Amalekites were defeated.—Moses is charged by God, to write the history of this memorable event into his book, which was then already commenced. Moses erects, in commemoration, an altar, which he calls, "God is my banner!" The extirpation of Amalek from among the nations of the earth is decreed in the council of God.

AND all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the Lord, and encamped in Rephidim: and *there was* no water for the people to drink. 2. And the people quarrelled with Moses, and said, Give us water, that we may drink. And Moses said to them, Why do you quarrel with me?

1. The Israelites break up from Sin which we have found identical with Wadi esh-Sheikh (see on xvi. 1); and from here they proceed on the command of God always nearer to their first great aim, the Sinai, and arrive at Dophkah, then at Alush (Num. xxxiii. 12, 13), and lastly at Rephidim. The two first stations are here omitted from the same principle, which we have already pointed out in our note on xvi. 1; and the text pauses at Rephidim, where the people "tried God" once more (ver. 2).—From the whole context (compare xviii. 5), especially from ver. 6, where the "rock in Horeb" is mentioned, Rephidim cannot lie far from the group of the Horeb mountains. The more accurate situation cannot be fixed with certainty. Perhaps it is the plain of Szueir, which is open and covered with low hills, and which extends between the Wadi esh-Sheikh and the Horeb in a southerly direction. But the Wadi Feiran it cannot possibly be, as Kutscheit and others believe, as that valley lies at too great a distance north-west of Horeb (see on xvi. 1).—Kitto infers, from the statement of Makrizi: "that Feiran was one of the towns of the Amalekites," that Rephidim is the Wadi Feiran. But according to ver. 8, the Amalekites *proceed* to Rephidim to fight against Israel (see on ver. 8).—According to others it is the deep, dark, rocky valley El-Ledsha, between the Horeb and the Mount St. Catherine, and in the west of the former (see p. 47); but this would, on the other hand, be so near the mountain of legislation, that another day's journey into the "desert of Sinai," would have been superfluous or impossible (see on xix. 1, 2).—*And there was no water*

for the people to drink. The great scarcity of water in the peninsula of Sinai is universally known: "In a space of 315 miles," says Harmar, "over part of this wilderness, Mr. Irwin found only four springs of water. In another space of 115 miles he found only four springs, at one of which the water was brackish, and at the other unwholesome." See xv. 22, 23.

2. *And the people quarrelled with Moses, and said, Give us water.* All the great and various wonders, which the Lord had hitherto wrought against their adversaries and for their own subsistence, had yet little served to strengthen their reliance in the love, and their belief in the omnipotence of God, and at every new privation, or every approaching danger, they murmured with obstinacy and refractoriness against Moses, who as they now knew, was but the instrument and messenger of God. But God's long-suffering and love in the face of this disbelief and contumacy, proved inexhaustible. On this occasion also the Israelites had, at a momentary want of water, impetuously demanded the satisfaction of that want, exclaiming: "we will try the Lord, and see whether He is really among us or not" (ver. 7). But this was a direct and immediate temptation of God, for which Moses reproved them with the words: "Wherefore do you try the Lord?" (ver. 2). To lead such a people into the land of promise, and to give them a pure and sublime, but still to them comprehensible religion and legislation, was a work, which human power alone would have been incapable to execute.

3. As the Israelites reproached Moses

Wherefore do you try the Lord? 3. And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore *is* this *that* thou hast brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? 4. And Moses cried to the Lord, saying, What shall I do to this people? ¹There is but little *wanting*, and they will stone me. 5. And the Lord

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—They be almost ready to stone me.

in xvi. 3, when famine menaced, that he had torn them from their Egyptian tranquillity and comfort, so also here, when the horrors of thirst threatened them. So deeply were their souls degraded, that they did not feel the ignominious servitude in Egypt, and even longingly remembered the "onions and garlick," which they did eat there freely.

4. Moses cried to God: What shall I do to this people? *there is but little wanting, and they will stone me.* Thus the Sept. and Vulgate; that is, their dissatisfaction has reached such a degree, that they will almost kill me in their excitement. Rashi takes these words less appropriately in their proper sense: "if I wait but a little, they will stone me."

5. God said to Moses: *Go on before the people.* Some, as Abarbanel, refer these words to the preceding verse: thou art afraid the people might stone thee; now, stand before it, and thou wilt see that it will not touch thee. But more correctly that phrase finds its explanation in the following verse: Go thou first alone to Horeb, whilst the people shall still remain in Rephidim.—Moses shall take some of the elders with him, according to Rashi and others, "that they might see and bear witness, that through him the water came from the rock, lest anybody say, that already from ancient times fountains existed there."—According to Nachmanides, the staff of Moses is here designedly described as that with which the Nile was smitten (vii. 20; viii. 5, etc.), not as that which was converted into a serpent, or in any similar manner, because in both cases a miracle was to be effected *with the water.*

6. This verse narrates a new wonder, how Moses, before the eyes of the elders, and by the assistance of God, struck water from a rock on Horeb, so that the whole people of Israel and all their flocks and herds had sufficient to drink. Our text admits no doubt concerning the miracle itself, and the manner in which it was effected; but tradition, mostly embellished by Christian monks and Mohammedan pilgrims, has appropriated to itself this subject to adorn and to hand down even its minutest details, with no word alluded to in the holy record, to the pious believers; and even enlightened travellers have suffered themselves to be blinded by such intentional or pious fictions. Thus reports Shaw, that, after having descended, with considerable difficulty, on the western side of Mount Sinai, he arrived in the plain of Rephidim [see, however, on ver. 1]. Here he saw that ancient relic, the rock *Meriba*, which he believes has remained to his time without the least change. He describes it as a square granite rock, each side about six yards long, which lies moveable and loose in the midst of the valley; it appears formerly to have been a piece or cliff of Mount Sinai, from which a great number of such huge rocks hang over the plain. The water which streamed from it has hollowed out a canal, about two inches deep and twenty wide, which is entirely covered with a kind of crust. Besides some spots overgrown with moss, which is still preserved by the dew, a number of holes are visible, some of which are four or five inches deep, and one or two in diameter, and Shaw considers them as clear and convincing traces that they

said to Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy staff, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thy hand, and go. 6. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7. And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the

were, formerly, as many fountains, and the effects of a great and extraordinary miracle. Similar accounts are given by Pococke (*Description of the Orient*, i. p. 215), who remarks, among other circumstances, that the rock has, on each side, twelve apertures, some of which have the appearance of lions' mouths. Instead of every other opinion or judgment, we subjoin the following intelligent observation of Mosheim (*Preface to the German translation of Pococke's Orient*, p. xvi): "We know the monks of Mount Sinai long since as men of no such sensitive conscience as to shrink from inventing wonders, and deceiving the travellers by fictitious monuments of the old and true miracles. It is not at all impossible, that those good people, in order to allure a greater number of pilgrims, and to enrich their convent, have hewn all those holes into the rock. And who knows whether the European divines have not, in the time of the crusades, improved that master-piece? We could collect a pretty numerous list of such pious impositions devised and executed during the period of the crusades. However, I will not decide in this matter. The green moss round the holes, and on that part of the rock over which the water has passed, seems to support the opinion of those who consider these apertures as eternal witnesses of the divine miracle; but the lion-like shape of some of these holes, which Pococke has observed, the order in which they stand, the number of the openings, which is the same on both sides, and which coincides with the number of the tribes of Israel, the exactly identical size of the holes, these, and several other cir-

cumstances, render the matter suspected in my eyes, almost against my will." Similar opinions of Büshing, Breuning, Belon, and others, see in *Rosenmüller's Orient*, ii. pp. 48—50. We have only introduced these remarks to prove how fluctuating and precarious the traditions are, which the mere desire of multiplying the wonders has invented, and which find no basis or justification in the holy text.—The knowledge of that miracle has reached other nations also, although in a disfigured form; thus relates Tacitus (*Hist. v. 3*): "But nothing distressed them so much as the want of water. And they were already all lying, throughout the whole camp, almost ready to expire, when a herd of wild asses, returning from pasture, approached a rock, shaded with a grove. Moses followed them, conjecturing that he would find a fertile soil, and opened large springs of water."—Nachmanides connects the beginning of our verse with the end of the preceding one, in the following manner: "Go, and proceed so long till thou perceivest me stand before thee on a rock." As regards the *sense*, a similar connection certainly exists between both verses.—On the geographical position of Horeb and Sinai, and the abundance of fountains and pastures there, see pp. 46, 47.—The words: "Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb," are thus explained by Ebn Ezra: "My strength and my power are in Horeb;" in which again a tendency to a figurative or rational interpretation is visible.

7. The name of the place where our occurrence took place was called

quarrelling of the children of Israel, and because they tried the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us, or not?

8. Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

9. And Moses said to Joshua, Choose out for us men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to-morrow I will stand on the

Massah (trial), because the Israelites had there tried God (see on ver. 2), and *Meribah* (quarrel), because they murmured against Moses, that he had led them from Egypt.

s. *Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.* With this event begins a new epoch in the historical existence of the people of Israel. Till then God had, as it were, Himself combatted for Israel, whilst they observed a quiet passive attitude (see xiv. 14). But now, in their struggle with Amalek, the Hebrews were, for the first time, to oppose the enemy with their own power and valour, and, though lovingly supported by divine assistance, to conquer by human means. The circumstance, that the Amalekites were the first who assumed a hostile position against the Israelites in their wanderings, caused a deadly indelible hatred between both nations, which was, on the part of the latter, the more intense and burning, as they had even not yet touched the proper territory of the Amalekites, who marched to Rephidim to attack the Israelites, without cause or necessity, just as, at all times, wild and warlike tribes of the desert fall upon and plunder the peaceful caravans. It appears further, from Deut. xxv. 17, 18, that they insidiously attacked the rear of the Hebrew army when it was exhausted and weary. The Amalekites are, according to Gen. xxxvi. 12, 16, of Idumæan origin, descending from Amalek, grandson of Esau. If we combine the different statements of the Old Testament concerning them, we find that their abodes were in the south of Palestine, in Arabia Petræa, in the neighbourhood of the Philistines, of the Mount Seir and the town Shur (Pelusium); therefore the principal part of the Amalekites seems to have lived between Phi-

listia, Egypt, Edom, and the desert of Mount Sinai, although a part of them inhabited the mountains of Ephraim (Judges v. 14). According to Arabian writers, as Abulfeda, the Amalekites were a very ancient indigenous people of Arabia, which is said to have lived there prior to the Ishmaelites, and even to the Joktanites. They assert also, that the Canaanites emigrated from Arabia to Palestine, and call them Amalekites. These accounts have a doubtful historical value, and they do not justify us in considering the Canaanites and the Amalekites as two nations *of the same tribe or stock*.—The historical relations between Amalek and Israel are easily traceable. After the Amalekites had been defeated in this first contact with the Hebrews at Rephidim, they conquered, later, the wandering Israelites at the southern frontier of Canaan (Numbers xiv. 43, *et seq.*). This called forth such animosity, that a perfect and eternal extirpation of the hateful tribe was severely commanded by the legislator (Deut. xxv. 17—19). In the period of the Judges, hordes of the Amalekites joined the enemies of the Israelites (1 Sam. xiv. 48, etc). Saul and David defeated them several times (1 Sam. xiv. 48; xv.; xxvii. 8; xxx. 1, *et seq.*; 2 Sam. viii. 12); and their last remains were destroyed by the Simeonites, under Hezekiah (1 Chron. iv. 43). From this time they are no more mentioned in the Biblical history.

9. Moses orders Joshua to choose men for the combat against the Amalekites. Joshua, who became afterwards so important in the history of Israel, is here mentioned for the first time. He was the son of Nun, from the tribe of Ephraim, and his name was originally Hoshea, which was changed into Jehoshua or Joshua, when Moses sent him with Caleb to explore Canaan (Numb. xiii.

top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand. 10. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, ¹to fight with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11. And it came to pass, when Moses held up

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And fought.

16). But he is, by anticipation, called by the latter name already in our passage; in xxiv. 13; xxxiii. 11, etc. In all undertakings he distinguished himself so much by courage and intelligence, that Moses chose him for his nearest and most familiar servant and companion; and, before his death, appointed him as the chief general of the Israelites (Exod. xxiv. 13; xxxii. 17; Numb. xi. 28; xiv. 6). He and Caleb were the only persons who, although above twenty years at the departure from Egypt, reached the Holy Land. As he attained the age of one hundred and ten years, and lived forty years in the desert, and twenty-five years in Canaan, he was, at the time of the war with Amalek, forty-five years old. Joshua was to fight with his chosen warriors against Amalek, whilst Moses stood, during the combat, with his staff in his hand, "on the top of the hill," not exactly on Mount Sinai, as Ebn Ezra adds.

10. Moses proceeded there, accompanied by Aaron and Hur. The latter is, according to the Talmud, the son of Miriam and Caleb (and grandfather of Bezaleel, xxxi. 2), but, according to Josephus, the husband of Miriam.

11. The sense of this verse is obscure, and has already much engaged the ancient interpreters, who attributed to it a symbolical meaning. Thus we read in the Talmud: "Can really the hands of Moses cause victory, if they are raised; or defeat, if they are let down? But Holy Writ teaches us here, that, when the Israelites looked up to heaven, and humbled themselves before their heavenly Father, they were victorious; if not, they were defeated. This is similar to the precept in Numbers xxi. 8: 'Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when

he looketh upon it, shall live.' Can a serpent cause or prevent healing? But if the Israelites regarded the heaven and were obedient to the precepts of their God, they were healed; if not, they perished."—This interpretation, although it approaches the spirit of our narrative, is yet too general to apply to this event. For during the combat, piety or impiety were out of the question; and further, the text does not state that the Israelites looked sometimes up to the hand of Moses and sometimes not; but that Moses now raised and now lowered it. Further, the staff of Moses would be of no meaning in that interpretation. The same must be objected to the explanation of Targum Jonathan and Jerusalem, that when Moses raised his hands to pray for the Israelites, they were victorious. Many interpreters have, therefore, proposed the explanation, that Moses raised his staff like a banner, and when the Israelites saw this banner, they were courageous and victorious; if they did not see it, they were desponding and fled; and therefore the place was called, "The Lord is my banner" (ver. 15). Thus, "to raise the hand" would be identical with "to show and display the standard." Joshua and Caleb, they continue, accompanied Moses, to bring his military commands to the army. Now, when Moses let the staff sink, the Israelites thought that he wished them to desist from the combat, and they became thus more languid in their exertions.—This explanation recommends itself from more than one side; and if a plain and natural interpretation is admissible in a passage, which seems to be designedly mysterious, it is no doubt the most acceptable. But questionable is the opinion of those who suppose that this whole account has been composed after a

his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. 12. But Moses' hands *were* heavy; and they took a stone, and put *it* under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the setting of the sun. 13. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with

picture, in which Moses was represented as general with his hand raised to heaven.

12. *And Moses' hands were heavy*; they became naturally tired after having been held up for any length of time. Aaron and Hur support his hands, one at each side; and they assist *alternately* that hand of Moses, with which he happened to raise the staff.—*And his hands were steady*, that is, he could lift them up without feeling fatigue. Rashi explains: "his hands were stretched out in confidence and belief, and with a devout and earnest prayer;" Rashbam: "his hands were firm for all times;" both against the context, which Ebn Ezra has indubitably explained correctly: "his hands stood firm."

13. *Amalek and his people*, stands instead of "the people of the Amalekites"; for the *king* cannot be understood by Amalek, since the monarchs of the Amalekites are called with a common name Agag, like those of the Egyptians, Pharaoh, etc. Compare Num. xxiv. 7; 1 Sam. xv. 8, 20, 32.

14. God commands Moses to record the victory gained over Amalek, which was the first and therefore pre-eminently most interesting event in the military history of Israel, for an eternal memorial *in the book* by no means in a book, as the English version renders. The definite article, which is implied in the Hebrew word, shows clearly that here a book known to Moses is alluded to. This was already observed by Ebn Ezra, who further remarks: "And this is the book of the Law, or any other book, which they had, perhaps the Book of the Wars

of the Lord; but it is now lost, like many other books, as for instance, the Book of the Righteous." But if we compare our verse with similar notices in other passages of the Pentateuch, it is clear almost to certainty, that here the "Book of Moses" is understood. We find in Exod. xxiv. 4, 7, that Moses, after having communicated the laws to the Israelites, wrote all the words of the Lord in the Book of the Covenant, which he read to the whole people (see note on that passage). A similar command is given to Moses by God in Exod. xxxiv. 27. According to Num. xxxiii. 1, 2, Moses wrote down all the journeys of the Israelites on the injunction of the Lord. Compare also Num. xxxvi. 13; Deut. xxviii. 61. It is, therefore, probable, that Moses committed to writing all the occurrences and laws, as they happened and were revealed to him, and that he thus gradually finished the four first books of the Pentateuch. Later, the Deuteronomy, or the repetition of the Law, was added, in which, indeed, the precept concerning the extirpation of Amalek is repeated with great emphasis (xxv. 17—19); as the execution of this decree was several centuries later, commanded to Saul in 1 Sam. xv. 2, 3 (see on ver. 8). It is, therefore, very doubtful to suppose with Ebn Ezra, that this section was written down in the fortieth year of the wanderings of Israel, which conjecture would lead us to very confused ideas concerning the composition of the Pentateuch. But it is still less admissible to assume with Vater and others who deny the universal acquaintance with the art of writing in the time of Moses, that *writing* always denotes in the Pen-

the edge of the sword. 14. And the Lord said to Moses, Write this *for* a memorial in ¹the book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua; for I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. 15. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it, "²The Lord is my banner." 16. For he said, ³Because the hand *was*

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—A book.

² JEHOVAH Nissi.

³ The Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have, etc.

tateuch engraving in stone. We do not see what those critics gain by such conjecture, as engraving in stone presupposes quite as much the use of the art of writing (see note on v. 6).—The combat with Amalek was especially to be enjoined to Joshua, because God knew that he would have to fight with the kings of Canaan, or as he was destined to lead the Israelites into the Holy Land, he should enforce upon them the duty to repay him what he had done to them; but especially, no doubt, because Moses had then already selected Joshua as his successor (see note on ver. 9).—The emphatical expression, "I will utterly efface the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven," is thus accounted for by Ebn Ezra: "He had provoked the wrath of the Lord; for whilst the princes of Edom, the Moabites, and Philistines were overwhelmed with fear on account of the signs He had done in Egypt and at the Red Sea; this Amalek came, notwithstanding, to combat against Israel and had no fear of God."

15. Moses built there an altar, and called it "the Lord is my banner." Thus translate Mendelssohn and others. Some leave the words untranslated, as Luther, and the English Version (JEHOVAH Nissi). The Septuagint renders, "my refuge." Onkelos paraphrases: "he prayed before God, who had done miracles for him;" so also Rashi: "God has done us here a miracle." But *Nissi* is here evidently the *banner*, round which the troops rally, and which indicates to them whither they have to turn in combat; so that God is considered as the centre of the army of Israel, an appropriate idea,

to which the explanation given in ver. 11 would also be adapted. (Compare Numb. xxi. 9; Psa. lx. 6; Isa. v. 26). By this appellation of the altar, the whole honour of the victory is ascribed to God alone, and it is, at the same time, clearly shown to the murmuring people, that God is really among them (ver. 7).

16. The first part of this verse, which has experienced very various explanations, contains, indubitably, a reason and argument, why Moses called the altar "God is my banner." Now, many interpreters, as Michælis, Gesenius, and others, have endeavoured to establish that causal-nexus by translating: "The altar was called, God is my banner, because the hand (of Moses) was at the banner of God (the miraculous staff)." Compare Gen. xvi. 13. But this explanation is not only questionable on account of the arbitrary alteration of the Hebrew text, but also on account of the obscure logical connection which this change would yield with the succeeding words: "war of the Lord against Amalek, from, generation to generation." The ancient expositors, as Targum Onkelos, Ebn Ezra, Rashi, Rashbam, and others, have therefore explained our words as an oath, which is the most clearly thus expressed by Onkelos: "This is proclaimed with an oath, and it has been issued from the face of the Omnipotent, whose majesty is on the throne of glory, that war be waged against the children of Amalek, to extirpate them in future time." (See also Ebn Ezra and Rashi. Similarly, English Version, Lengerke, and others). Thus explains also Bishop Patrick, that the expression, "to lay the hand on the

against the throne of God; *therefore* the Lord *will have* war with Amalek from generation to generation.

throne," points to a custom which was, in some countries, connected with solemn oaths, as in other countries the hand was, on such occasions, put on the altar. In this custom, the phrase originated, "to put the hand on the altar," instead of "to swear"; and, therefore, says Juvenal (xiii. 89), of those impious people who feel no compunctions of conscience in committing perjury: "they touch the altars without fear." In this sense, God charged His people here to exterminate the Amalekites. But, against such explanation, we must object, that it would require the first words of our verse to be, "for the hand of God was upon His throne;" and

that thus, also, the connection between this and the preceding verse would not be clear. It is, therefore, preferable to explain: for the hand (of Amalek) was on the throne of God, that is, the people of Israel, which God had selected for Himself as His throne or particular abode on earth (see on xix. 5, 6; 1 Chron. xxix. 23); and the connection would be thus: God is my banner, and He will eternally fight against Amalek, who has wickedly raised his hand against His people.—About the connection of our passage with 1 Sam. xv., see *Hengstenberg*, *Authent.* ii. p. 309—313.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SUMMARY.—When Jethro learnt the miraculous deliverance of Israel, and the prominent part which Moses, his son-in-law, had taken on all occasions, he proceeded to him to Mount Horeb, in the vicinity of which Israel encamped, and brought to him his wife Zipporah, and his two sons, Gershom and Eliezer, whom he had sent back to Midian, when on his way to Egypt. Moses received Jethro cheerfully, who, on his part, showed also sincere sympathy for the extraordinary events in favour of Israel. When he saw, the next day, the great burden of judicial labours which rested upon Moses alone, he advised him to divide the people numerically into sections of ten, fifty, a hundred, and a thousand persons, and to appoint over every section a subordinate judge, who should decide all minor disputes, whilst only the more important differences, which could not be settled by them, should be brought before Moses as the supreme court of appeal (see on ver. 21). Moses readily accepted the proposal, and put it into immediate execution.

WHEN Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel His people, that the Lord had

1. Some ancient interpreters, as Ebn Ezra (on ver. 13) and Rashbam, whom several modern critics, as Ranke, have followed, are of opinion, that the narration concerning Jethro, which is here inserted, does not stand in its proper place, and that the arrival of Jethro took place only in the second year after the legislation, or after the erection of the tabernacle. As reasons, Ebn Ezra mentions: 1. That according to ver. 12, "a burnt-offering and eucharistic sacrifices"

were killed, whilst nothing has been related about the building of a new altar. 2. The words in ver. 20: "and thou shalt illustrate to them the ordinances and laws," point to the time after the legislation. 3. That Moses encamps, according to ver. 5, by "the mountain of God." 4. That according to Num. x. 30, Jethro returned to his home (ver. 27), only when the Israelites departed from Horeb; and 5. That the new arrangement of Jethro explained in our chapter, took place not

brought Israel out of Egypt: 2. Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, 3. And her two sons; of whom the name of the one *was* Gershom; for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land: 4. And the name of the other *was*

earlier than in the time of that departure. —And that sagacious commentator explains this irregularity in the narrative by the supposition, that after the hostilities of Amalek, the benevolence and kindness of Jethro was to be mentioned, whilst others (as Rashbam) account for it by the opinion, that the divine laws, given at Sinai (chap. xix. to Num. x) should not be interrupted by human institutions recommended by Jethro, (which reason is also adopted by Ranke). —But if Jethro really arrived only after the legislation, nothing prevented the sacred writer from mentioning his arrival after Numbers x. The words in ver. 20, may simply refer to the Sabbath and other general precepts, and similar expressions are already used in xv. 25. That the "mountain of God" is mentioned cannot appear surprising, as Moses was, even according to xvii. 6, on mount Horeb. There is, therefore, no reason to doubt, that Jethro arrived already now, during the second month after the exodus. And this is even necessary, if we consider, that while Moses communicates to Jethro the rescue from various dangers, and all the miracles (ver. 8), the greatest and most remarkable wonder, the revelation and legislation, is not mentioned by the remotest allusion, which would be perfectly improbable if that revelation had already taken place.—It is further unnecessary, to recur, with Philippon, Herxheimer, and others, to the conjecture, that although Jethro arrived already now, he proposed and organized his institutions much later, after the legislation, after having convinced himself, by longer observation, of the requirements and wants of the people. For the words, "on the following day," in ver. 13, compel us to suppose the schemes of Jethro to have been devised the very day after

his arrival; for to explain it with Rashi: "on the day after that on which Moses came the second time from the mountain," is absolutely against the connection of the text.—Numerous disputes must have necessarily arisen among so large a host as the Israelites then were; nobody was more appropriate to decide all those questions than Moses, who enjoyed the greatest authority; and he exercised the judicial functions according to his own judgment and discretion, even before he had been furnished with a code of laws by divine revelation.—The departure of Jethro is added in ver. 27 only in order to complete here the account concerning Jethro entirely (compare xvi. 35), and is repeated in Num. x. 29—32, in its due place. And justly remarks Philippon, that if we suppose, that Jethro returned to Midian already before the legislation, as is reported in ver. 27, he could have stayed with Moses but a few days, which would scarcely have sufficed for the organization of his new institutions, and which would hardly have been in accordance with the character of an Oriental visit in the desert.—But the mention of sacrifices (ver. 12) can, even before the legislation, not appear strange, as they were customary already from the times of Abraham, and were in use among all ancient nations (see note on ver. 12). —About Jethro and his different names see note on ii. 18; about "priest of Midian," on ii. 16.

2—5. About Zipporah, the wife of Moses, see note on ii. 21; about her return to Midian, to her father Jethro, after Moses had taken her and his children, Gershom and Eliezer, with him into Egypt, see note on iv. 20; and about the names of the children, on ii. 22. Ebn Ezra observes, on this occasion, that the etymological derivations of Biblical

Eliezer; for the God of my father, *said he, was* my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh: 5. And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, went with his sons and his wife to Moses in the desert, where he encamped *at* the mountain of God: 6. And he ¹sent word to Moses, I thy father-in-law Jethro come to thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her.—7. And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and bowed down, and kissed him; and they asked each other of *their* welfare; and they went into the tent. 8. And Moses told his father-in-law all that the Lord had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, *and* all the trouble that had come upon them by the way, and ²*from which* the Lord had delivered them. 9. And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel, whom He had delivered out of

¹ *Enol. Vers.*—Said.

² How.

names do not always strictly harmonize with the grammatical rules or the roots of the radical words, and proves this position by various instances. Modern critics have laid too much stress on remarks like this.—As Rephidim lies in the immediate vicinity of Horeb, and perhaps belongs even to the valleys of that chain of mountains, Moses might already be considered encamping at “the mountain of God.” But the opinion of the Midrash that Jethro knew, that Moses would go to Horeb with the Israelites (iii. 12), because God had promised him this as “a sign,” is untenable, because Moses had entirely concealed from Jethro the real motive of his return to Egypt (iv. 18).

6. *And he (Jethro) sent word to Moses,* through a messenger. The latter is often identified with him who sends him, and in whose name and commission he comes; see vii. 17.

7. On the words: “And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law,” Ebn Ezra remarks, very characteristically: “because of Jethro's honour and wisdom; but he did not go to meet his wife and children, for it is not customary for a man of rank and authority to do this.”

10. *Delivered you;* Moses and Aaron,

the agents of God, and the instruments of redemption, and, as such, the most exposed to danger, are placed in juxtaposition to the people of Israel.—*Out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh;* first, the generic noun (the Egyptians), and then the principal individual of this genus: “out of the hand of the Egyptians, and especially out of the hand of Pharaoh,” as in Isa. i. 1, “on Judah, and especially on Jerusalem.”

11. *Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods* (compare xv. 11, and note on vi. 7). — *Yea, by the very thing that they acted wickedly against them.* Numerous are the interpretations which have been proposed on these difficult words, and for which we refer to our larger edition. But the best clue for their explanation offers the parallel passage in Neh. ix. 10, where we read: “Thou didst wonders against the Egyptians; for thou knewest that they [the Egyptians] acted wickedly against them [the Israelites];” and the sense is: even in that very circumstance, that the Egyptians acted tyrannically against the Israelites, God showed His greatness; the wickedness of the Egyptians became, in the hand of God, an instrument to display His omni-

the hand of the Egyptians. 10. And Jethro said, Blessed be the Lord, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh; who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. 11. Now I know that the Lord *is* greater than all the gods: ³yea, by the *very* thing, that they acted wickedly against them. 12. And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took a burnt offering and *eucharistic* sacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat with Moses' father-in-law before God.—13. And it came to pass on the following morning, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning to the evening. 14. And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What *is* this thing that thou doest to the people? Why sittest thou thyself alone, and

³ *Engl. Vers.*—For in the thing wherein they dealt proudly *he was* above them.

potent power. See note on xiv. 4: "and I will be honoured through Pharaoh, and through all his host, that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord." Similar, but, in our opinion, not sufficiently clear and simple, is the explanation of Philippson: "just then, when they (the Egyptians and their gods) acted wickedly against the Israelites, they prevailed nothing against God, but He subdued them."

12. Out of gratitude to God, and of joy at the miraculous deliverance of Israel, Jethro offered a burnt-offering and eucharistic sacrifices to God; and Moses and Aaron, and all the elders of Israel, participated in the feast prepared on this occasion, so that it took place, as it were, before God. We remark here, but briefly, that the burnt-offering was entirely burnt to the Lord, whilst the eucharistic offering was, with the exception of certain pieces of fat, which were burnt on the altar, and the breast and right leg, which belonged to the priest, consumed, on the same or the following day, in a convivial repast, by the Israelite, his family, and the guests whom he invited, and among whom the Levites and the poor were never forgotten. The accurate details concerning the sacrifices, will be explained

in the course of this commentary in their due places. Although Jethro was a heathen priest, he seemed now to have been induced, by the manifest omnipotence of the God of Israel, to acknowledge and to adore Him; and as it was to Him that he offered sacrifices, the Israelites could, consistently, take part in the meal connected with them. It was not necessary to mention here Moses expressly, as the meeting took place in his tent. Such sacrificial feasts were, on joyful occasions, celebrated, not only by the Israelites, but by almost all nations of antiquity, and the Homeric poems are replete with instances, and detailed and interesting descriptions of such meals.

13. *And it came to pass on the following morning*, that is, the day after the arrival of Jethro, who, therefore, proposed at this early period his new judicial organization (see on ver. 1).

14. The stress, in Jethro's question, lies in the circumstance, that Moses judges, single-handed, the whole people, not, as Rashi and others believe, in the *sitting* of Moses, whilst he humiliates and degrades the people by letting them stand before him; which opinion has already been rejected by Ebn Ezra.

all the people stand by thee from morning to the evening? 15. And Moses said to his father-in-law, ¹The people come to me to enquire of God: 16. When they have a matter, they come to me; and I judge between one and another, and I make *them* know the statutes of God, and His laws. 17. And Moses' father-in-law said to him, the thing that thou doest *is* not good. 18. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that *is* with thee: for this thing *is* too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Because the people.

15, 16. The Hebrew conjunction "because" often merely introduces an indirect speech, and is, therefore, not to be translated in English.—*To enquire of God*, is a juridical phrase: to consult the judges, who are themselves called *gods* (Elohim) in the Pentateuch (see note on xxi. 6); and the adoption of Jethro's institutions, by which many other Israelites were also appointed as judicial functionaries (see on ver. 21), shows sufficiently, that Moses, as judge, is here not considered as the special "mouth of God," or His inspired instrument. We cannot, therefore, find, in the answer of Moses: "The people come to me to enquire of God" (that is, to hear my juridical decision), any direct insinuation that Moses could not well choose other judges besides himself, since the people came to enquire of *God*. It is, however, true, that in verse 16 a distinction seems to be made between judicial sentences and general religious and moral injunctions, which Moses makes to them according to the character of their disputes.

19, 20. *Be thou for the people*, "in the face of God," or instead of God; that is, when their wisdom does not suffice, and the other judges now to be appointed are unable to decide, thou shalt act as the judge, who is instructed by God Himself, thou shalt answer them, and at the same time teach them wisdom and morality, or fix laws, in order not to be required to be consulted in every single case. Compare notes on iv. 6, and vii. 1, 2.

21. That the Israelites were perfectly unorganized in a judicial as well as in every other respect, is evident from the most cursory consideration of their condition in the Egyptian bondage (compare ii. 11, *et seq.*). The elders had a certain natural authority among them, as is usually the case among predominantly pastoral nations and tribes, and we have had more than one opportunity in the history of the deliverance of Israel to point out the sphere of action of the elders as representatives of the people, in their position to Moses and Pharaoh. But a greater internal unity of the people was naturally prevented by the jealous control and the invidious suspicion, with which they were treated by the Egyptian monarchs. The genius of Moses, whose mildness and humility rendered him, in the eyes of the people, both an object of admiration and affection, was the accidental centre, round which the Hebrew hosts gathered in the days of their redemption, and the universal confidence which his abilities and his virtues inspired, replaced, in that critical and exceptional time, the want of a well-balanced political system. But although the same patriotic zeal of Moses remained unabated even after the exode, it was unavoidable, that his strength should not, in some degree, succumb under the weight of his various avocations; and although the confidence of the people in their leader remained, on the whole, unshaken, the administration of justice especially, if exercised by one individual, must necessarily have taken a

thyself alone. 19. Harken now to my voice; I will give thee counsel, and God may be with thee: Be thou for the people instead of God, that thou mayest bring the causes to God: 20. And thou shalt teach them the ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. 21. Moreover, thou shalt select out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating unjust gain; and place *such* over them, *to be* rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds,

very slow and tiresome course, calculated to injure the interests, and to try the patience of the people (ver. 18). Jethro, therefore, who was himself, as the spiritual head of a numerous tribe, well acquainted with public affairs and popular administration, proposed the division of the people into numerical classes, in sections of ten, fifty, a hundred, and a thousand, most likely coinciding with the natural genealogical division into tribes, families and houses, and to appoint a judge over each of these divisions (compare Deut. i. 13, 15). It is probable, that a certain sub-ordination existed between these different sections, so that an appeal was permitted from the judge over ten to the judge over fifty, and from this to the judge over a hundred, and that, therefore, a cause which had not been decided to the satisfaction of both parties by the judge over a thousand, was brought before Moses himself (ver. 19). By this arrangement, Moses was naturally freed from a vast number of petty affairs, and he was now able to direct his attention chiefly to the general religious, moral, and material improvement of the people. This new organization permitted, besides, an easier control over the whole people, nor could it have been entirely without profit for military purposes (Num. xxxi. 14).—But, however great the advantages might have been, which Jethro's proposal offered, it is obvious, that it verged to the opposite extreme; now the *great number* of judges must have proved an essential encumbrance; for, if we suppose the people to

have counted 600,000 men, there were not less than 60,000 judges over ten; 12,000 over fifty; 6,000 over a hundred, and 600 over a thousand, or an aggregate sum of 78,600 judges, which number was certainly unavailable for general deliberations. Therefore Moses saw, later, the necessity of surrounding himself with a senate (Synedrium) of seventy elders, who assisted him in all difficult matters and critical circumstances with their advice, and that authority which they enjoyed with the people, and who were at the same time intended “to temper, by this admixture of an aristocratical element, the appearance of a monarchy, which the sole legislation of Moses might have assumed” (*Michaelis*, Mos. R. i. 50).—We need scarcely remark, that the organization proposed by Jethro was only in force during the time of the wanderings of Israel in the desert; since the merely numerical division must naturally have become ineffectual, as soon as the Hebrews had settled in towns (Deut. xvi. 18). Hengstenberg asserts, that these arrangements were, on the contrary, chiefly intended for the future Hebrew state in Palestine; but he feels himself, that such a complicated organization would have been impracticable, and proposes therefore the conjecture, that the numbers 1000, 100, 50 and 10, are not to be taken literally, but that they signify tribes, and large or small families, consisting of about that amount of souls. But although *thousand* is sometimes used in the sense of *tribe*, it would be difficult to

rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: 22. And let them judge the people at all times: and it shall be, *that* every great matter they shall bring to thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so ¹make it easier for thyself, that they may bear *the burden* with thee. 23. If thou wilt do this thing, and God command thee *so*, then thou wilt be able to endure, and all this people will also go to their place in peace.—24. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said. 25. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 26. And they judged the people at all times: the difficult causes they brought to Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.—27. And Moses let his father-in-law depart; and he went his way into his own land.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Shall it be easier.

prove that *hundred*, or *fifty*, or *ten*, are applied synonymously with *family*.—It is supposed, and with probability, that Alfred the Great, who was well versed in the Bible, based his own Saxon constitution of sheriffs in counties, etc., on the example of the Mosaic division (compare *Bacon*, on *Engl. Government*, i. 70). An exactly similar system obtained in the kingdom of Peru (*Heriot's Canada*, p. 565).—It will not be found contradictory, that the appointment of the judges is in our passage placed before the arrival of the Israelites in the plains of Mount Sinai, whereas it is in Deut. i. 9—17, related immediately before the departure from Horeb. For the passage in Deut. comprises the whole time of the wanderings in its full extent.—*Able men*, originally men of vigour, manliness, and activity. Rashi: "opulent men, who have no occasion to flatter and judge after favour"; Ebn Ezra: "individuals who have strength to bear the burden, and fear *God*, but not men."—Not quite unfounded is the

astonishment of Ebn Ezra, that Moses should have been able to find among the degenerated Israelites, who showed themselves now, and almost always during the wanderings in the desert, pusillanimous and refractory, 78,600 men of so distinguished and exalted qualities.

23. *And if God commands thee to do this.* For Moses was first to obtain the sanction of God for Jethro's proposals. Vater explains, against the context: "then thou wilt receive the commands of God." By these new arrangements Moses will be able to bear the weight of occupations, and the people will, with cheerfulness and satisfaction, return home from the tribunals, as they would find an easy and expeditious jurisdiction.

25. The Samaritan text has, instead of this verse, with slight alterations, all that which Deut. ix. 1—18 contains on this subject; that must, however, be considered as a spurious gloss intended to amplify our text.

27. See note on ver. 1, at the end.

CHAPTER XIX.

SUMMARY.—On the first day of the third month, the Israelites arrive in the desert of Sinai, and encamp in the valleys before the mountain. Moses is charged by God to propose to the Israelites the question, whether they will accept His precepts, and keep the covenant which He intended to make with them; for then they would be His chosen and holy people. The Israelites promise obedience and willingness. In order to enhance the authority of Moses in the eyes of the people, and to make them fully believe in his divine mission, God speaks to him from the top of the mountain, in the presence of the whole nation; and He commands, that the Israelites, even the priests, should sanctify themselves two days, and, on the third, keep themselves ready for the divine revelation, during which they were forbidden to approach the mountain, which was fenced for this purpose. God appears under thunder and lightning, clouds and fire, to the trembling people. After Moses had, once more, on the command of God, warned the people, he ascended the mountain, accompanied by Aaron; and the Lord proclaimed the decalogue.

ON the third 'new-moon after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they *into* the wilderness of Sinai.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Month.

1, 2. From Rephidim, which, although its exact identity is now doubtful, certainly lies in the vicinity of Horeb, and between this mountain and Wadi esh-Sheikh, the Israelites marched towards their great immediate aim, the desert of Sinai, where they encamped "in the face of, or before the mountain" (ver. 2), or, "beneath it" (ver. 17). We remind the reader, here, from our description of the peninsula of Sinai, only of the fact, that probably the whole group of mountains which covers this region, was called "Mount Horeb" (see xvii. 6; xviii. 5), whilst the southern and higher peak bore the name of Sinai (p. 47). The Hebrew nation, therefore, coming from the north, encamped in the plains which surround Mount Sinai, and so that they had the mountain before them, and could see from all parts the thunders and lightnings which raged around its head. Both an accurate comparison of the respective passages of the holy books, and probability and tradition, oblige us to consider that southern mountain Sinai as that on which the revelation was proclaimed. Thus only it can be accounted for, that the divine manifestation is sometimes said to have taken place on Horeb (the general

term), and sometimes on Sinai (the individual peak). Further, the Sinai, being the higher mountain of the two, could best be seen from all parts, and in the different valleys; and, lastly, Mohammedan tradition calls the Sinai "the mountain of Moses." The objection which has often been raised against this locality, that it offered no great plain for the extensive camp of the Hebrew hosts, is already removed by that which we have observed. For the Israelites encamped, 1st, only "in the desert"; 2nd, "before the mountain," so that they could see it; and this was possible from the numerous small valleys which surround the group of the Horeb. It is even much more appropriate to suppose, that the people encamped, distributed after tribes and families, and in single groups, throughout the valleys, than that they were all pressed together near one part of the mountain, where the great crowd of the people might have been attended with the most dangerous consequences (ver. 21). Robinson arrived, by careful examination, at the conviction, that here was space enough to satisfy all the requisitions of the scripture narrative, so far as it relates to the assembling of

2. Namely, they journeyed from Rephidim and came to the desert of Sinai, and encamped in the wilder-

the congregation to receive the law (Biblical Researches, i. 141). And yet did Robinson only know the plain Er-Rahah, at the north-east extremity of Horeb. But, since his time, the existence of the plain Wadi Sebaiyeh, at the southern base of Sinai, has been fully established, not only by Laborde, but also by the American traveller, M. K. Kellog, who has attentively examined the surrounding localities of Mount Sinai. That valley forms, with the Wadi er-Rahah, and the Wadi Sheikh, one continuous plain, for about twelve miles northwards. It is, on the east, bounded by mountains with long sloping bases, and covered with wild thyme and other herbs. "The width of the plain immediately in front of Sinai, is about 1,600 feet, but, further south, the width is much increased, so that, on an average, the plain may be considered as being nearly one-third of a mile wide, and its length, in view of Mount Sinai, between five and six miles." It thus furnished ample tenting-ground for the hosts of Israel. The general silence of eastern travellers, with regard to this southern plain, Wadi Sebaiyeh, may be traced to the circumstance that, on passing from Mount St. Catharine, eastward beyond the valley El-Ledsha, high granite spurs, generally surrounded by deep and rugged gorges and ravines, or water-courses, separate Wadi Sebaiyeh from Sinai; and from no part of the narrow path which lies between those spurs and the mountain, and which is usually taken by the travellers, is the southern plain visible. But, although Dr. Robinson was not aware of this valley, his observations do by no means compel us "to throw aside all our faith in tradition," with which they stand in full harmony; nor is it necessary to suppose, with others (as Kitto, *Scripture Lands*, p. 67), that the Israelites, to reach that valley, "must have continued their march much further down the coast than on the other supposition, and turned, at a bolder angle, up

into the mountains, near the modern town Tur, or Tor; and that Dophkah, Alush, and Rephidim, must be transferred to other localities;" all this is unnecessary, for the Wadi Sebaiyeh is, in fact, nothing but the continuation of Wadi esh-Sheikh, with which it is connected by the Wadi er-Rahah. Thus, all circumstances speak for the authenticity of our text, and of tradition.

In opposition hereto, however, the opinion has most frequently been advocated, that the revelation took place on *Mount Serbal*, which is surrounded by wide plains, suitable for a camp of the Israelites. Mount Serbal lies in a north-westerly direction from the group of Sinai, from which it is separated by Wadi Osmet. Namely, from Wadi Taibe, which lies a few hours south of Wadi Gharendel, on the coast of the Gulf of Suez, the mountain-chains run farther eastward into the interior of the peninsula, so that from there a long, gradually-widening, arid plain is formed, which extends to the southern point of the peninsula, the Ras Mohammed. In this direction follow, after the Wadi Taibe, successively, the Wadis Nasseb, Mokatteb, Feiran, and Nadie, in the south of which rises Mount Serbal. We will not urge here the circumstance, that it would be very difficult to identify the journeys of the Israelites from Marah and Elim down to Mount Serbal, if this were the next aim of their marches, as we have tried to prove at the single stations; we will only endeavour to refute the arguments which, for instance, Kitto (*Pict. Bible*, i. p. 189) has advanced in its favour. He adduces, 1st. The *height* of Mount Serbal, which made it most eligible for the divine legislation. But the Serbal is not the highest mountain of the peninsula; we have already observed (p. 63), that it is the Mount St. Catharine, to the west of Horeb and Sinai: 2nd. The *abundance of valleys* round the Serbal; which point we have already answered in the foregoing re-

ness; and there Israel encamped before the mountain.
3. And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to

marks: 3rd. The passages, Deut. xxxiii. 2: "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir to them; He shone forth from Mount Paran,....from His right hand came a fiery law for them," and Habak. iii. 3: "The Lord came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran." This Mount Paran is, by Kitto, considered identical with Mount Feiran (see *supra*). Even if we acknowledge this hypothesis, we must observe, that, if Paran is so literally taken as a mountain in the vicinity of Sinai, we must suppose the same of the region of Seir, which, however, extends from the Dead Sea to the Elanitic Gulf, and lies very considerably north of Feiran. The same must be said of Teman, a country in the east of Idumæa. Further, the part where the revelation took place is frequently called Horeb, which scarcely applies to Mount Serbal, much less to Feiran and Seir. The preposition *from* in the passages above quoted, shows merely the direction from some part: God came, as it were, from the north, from the Holy Land, His usual abode, to Mount Sinai, in order to reveal Himself there in glory to Moses. He further adduces as proof, 4th. *Tradition*, which mentions the Serbal as the mountain of legislation. How uncertain such traditions are, and how ready the Bedouins show themselves to give to any locality every desired significance, has been acknowledged by all travellers (see *supra*, on xiv. 1—3, p. 180). But, in this instance, even tradition speaks for Mount Sinai, where "the convent of Mount Sinai" was founded already in the sixth century of the vulgar era (527); and undoubtedly the emperor Justinian followed, in its establishment, the tradition then prevailing. It is, therefore, indisputable, that not the Serbal, but the Sinai, is the mountain of revelation.

1. On the third new moon after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, they arrived just on that first day of the month in the desert of Sinai.—The third

month was later called Sivan (Esth. viii. 9). See note on xii. 2.

2. According to Jewish tradition, Moses ascended the mountain on the second day of Sivan (ver. 3); on the third, he received the answer of the people (ver. 7); on the fourth, he ascended the mountain for the second time (ver. 8); then followed the days of preparation, on the fourth and fifth; and, on the sixth, the revelation of the decalogue took place. The three days before the sixth of Sivan are called "the three days of separation." See vers. 12, 14, 23. Compare also note on xxiii. 16. At Mount Sinai the Israelites stayed almost a whole year, from the first day of the third month in the first year of their wanderings, to the twentieth of the second month in the second year (Numb. x. 11); and received here, during this period, the legislation in almost all its details. This is, perhaps, the only part of the peninsula which, abounding in fountains and green pastures, permitted so long a sojourn to the numerous people and their many herds.

3—6. Already from the beginning of his mission Moses had fostered the great idea, to bestow upon the Israelites not only liberty but truth;—not only to lead them from the inauspicious soil of Egypt, but to train them to useful and vigorous citizens of the promised land (see iii. 12). Little would their liberty have availed them, had they, in the obstinacy of their hearts, and the darkness of their minds, undertaken a planless march in the unknown solitudes of the desert. Moses, therefore, led them now, under divine direction, into a district, in which they could, secluded from all toils and struggles of human pursuits, and only a few times disturbed from their rest by transitory hostile attacks, receive in collected tranquillity the laws of their legislator. This was thus most properly a time of instruction and education, during which their thoughts were exclusively engaged with this one grand object. But Moses,

him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: 4. You have seen what I did to Egypt, and *how* I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to myself. 5. Now,

on the point of carrying the great and difficult work into execution, is anew reminded of the improbability, that a people, which seemed sunk in the meanest materialism, and which thought liberty itself too dearly bought by a few short privations, should possess a degree of self-denial and spiritualism, such as was requisite for the understanding of the purest religious doctrines. Therefore he proposes to them once more, in the name of God, the question, whether, in grateful reminiscence of His loving protection, they were determined to obey His commandments, and to preserve the covenant which He now intended to renew with them on a still more sacred basis (vers. 3—6). Only after the people had solemnly and unanimously promised this (ver. 8), follow the direct preparations for the revelation of God and the promulgation of the law (ver. 10, *et seq.*).

3. *And Moses went up to God*, that is, on the mountain of God, as the Sept. even translates. Abarbanel takes these words spiritually: Moses occupied his mind with the holiest ideas of God, but without leaving his tent. However ingenious such symbolical interpretations may be, the clear context of this and many other passages does not permit us to abandon the simple and literal acceptance.

4. God spoke to Moses *from the mountain*, that is, according to ver. 20, from the top of it, in solemn words and poetical parallelism; and this sublime form of the divine address is intended to place in a more expressive light the importance and significance of the question. God reminds the Israelites appropriately first of the special providence, with which He had hitherto treated them, as they had seen *themselves* how He had delivered them from the oppression of the Egyptians, and, with a

beautiful and deep poetical phrase, "borne them on eagles' wings and brought them to Himself." The strength and majesty of the eagle, the rapidity of his flight, and his power to shield his young from the attacks of other birds, and by his high soaring to protect them even from the arrows of the hunter, render him an eminently appropriate image of comparison for the omnipotence of God, with which He had rescued Israel from all dangers, the calamity of hunger and thirst, and the attack of the enemies. But by tenderness for his young also is the eagle distinguished. The same image, in which the care of God for Israel is compared with the strength and tenderness of the eagle, is more carried out in Deut. xxxii. 11: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead them," etc.—Rabbinical interpreters urge the word *on*, and explain: whilst all other birds carry their young between their feet through the air, because they fear the attack of stronger and higher flying birds, the eagle bears them on his wings, as he has not to fear any other bird, but only the arrows of men, and prefers rather to be pierced himself, than to witness the death of his young; "thus the Egyptians threw swords and spears, but the pillar of cloud kept them off."—The words: "and I brought you to myself," are taken too externally by those who explain them: I brought you to my mountain, the Horeb. They stand in close relation with the beginning of this verse, and form the strongest confirmation of our foregoing remark. The Israelites had, on the one side by the Egyptian servitude, on the other, by the Egyptian idolatry, with which they had contaminated themselves, swerved far from God, His purity and sanctity, in a word, from

therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure to me above all nations: for all the earth is mine: 6. And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These

truth and genuine faith; now God, in graciously granting them His revelation and His pure doctrines, brings them again back to Himself; He intends to make them "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." And in this sense translates Onkelos: "and I brought you to my service," and still more distinctly explains Rashbam: "that I may be your God." Now the Lord commands the Israelites to listen to His voice; and this is explained by the following words, that they shall keep His covenant, which He makes with them anew by the legislation, and by which their old relation as covenanters of God was to be enlarged and strengthened.

5. *Then you shall be a peculiar treasure to me.* Thus the people of Israel are called in several other passages also, as Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2; xxvi. 18. Israel was, then, intended to be the selected treasure of God among all nations (Levit. xx. 26; Ps. cxxxv. 4), *although the whole world belongs to Him*; as He, therefore, is the Lord of all, the often repeated, absurd remark, that in the Pentateuch God is represented merely as the particular deity of Israel, and as it were but as a national God, is sufficiently refuted. We have already had other opportunities to expose that fallacy (see note to vi. 7).

6. *The Israelites shall be to God a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.* It is unnecessary to seek with some interpreters, in these words exactly the intimation, that as in Egypt and some other eastern countries the priests formed the favoured, and often the governing caste, thus the Israelites should, as it were, have a part in the government of God with a peculiar privilege. The phrase: "you shall be to me a holy nation," expresses merely, that God wished to consider *all* Israelites as His priests, that is, as the religious officers consecrated

to His service, who, therefore, are to Him particularly dear on account of their piety and holiness, and whom He favours with His special protection. Not individual privileged members of the people, but the whole community shall stand in the nearest and closest connection with God, and be participant of His inspirations. The Israelites should be among the other nations, what the priests are in *one* nation; they were selected to propagate the doctrine of God, and thus to become the teachers and prophets of the nations. The priests form, in many respects, the medium between God and the people; they "bring the people to God" (ver. 4); and thus it was the grand vocation of Israel to be the medium between the nations of the earth and God, to bring all the nations to God, and thus ultimately to form one whole with the rest of the world, to cease to be a *chosen* people, because they had made the truth of God a common property of mankind. The resigning of its peculiar glory was the signal of the perfect triumph of Israel. The words of our text describe, therefore, the notion of the "government of God," or *theocracy*, as the Hebrew state is usually called: God is the supreme invisible king, whom all citizens serve as priests, but so that an earthly king, as His human representative, is thereby not excluded (see Judg. viii. 23; 1 Sam. viii. 7). The word *theocracy* is first used by Josephus, who remarks: "Some legislators have permitted their governments to be under monarchies, others put them under oligarchies, and others under a republican form; but our legislator had no regard to any of these forms, but he ordained our government to be what, by a strained expression, may be termed a *theocracy*, by ascribing the authority and the power to God, and by persuading all the people

are the words which thou shalt speak to the children of Israel. 7. And Moses came and called for the elders of

to have a regard to Him." From these words the character and the signification of a theocracy are clearly discernible; where God rules as a king, every subject is, as it were, a priest, and every civil action assumes the sanctity of a religious function; idolatry becomes an offence against His sovereignty (*crimen majestatis*), and was, therefore, punished with death (Deut. xvii. 2); and from the same principle blasphemy, false prophecy, profanation of the Sabbath, and witchcraft, were persecuted with the same extreme punishment; and even disrespect against elders, judges and parents, who were considered, in certain respects, as the representatives of God, was severely punished; in fact, every law, however unimportant in appearance, assumes the dignity of a precept commanded by the eternal King; and its transgression is a violation of His sovereignty. Further, the whole land belongs to God; the people are but its tenants; nobody has, therefore, the right of transferring his landed property to others; it returns in the jubilee to its former owner, or to his heirs. Again, the Israelites are the subjects of God; they are His servants for ever; slavery was, therefore, excluded; the servant went out free in the seventh year; and if he declined to accept the liberty, he was branded with a mark of ignominy, because he refused the immediate sovereignty of God. A direct consequence of the theocratical government was, the office of prophecy. The prophets are inspired by God; they are His mouth; their dicta are the words of God; and disobedience to the prophets is a breach of the allegiance due to God. But the prophets had no legislative power, nor had they any regular or clearly defined political influence; it was their task merely to exhort the people to remain faithful to the law of God, and to keep aloof from every idolatrous abomination. This was their duty; in all other respects they were merely advisers; they

had no authority to introduce a new law, or to reform an old one, except in so far as their moral influence swayed the people. The prophets were the messengers of God to preserve the pure monotheism and the genuine theocracy.—God is the only legislator; the Law is the eternal unalterable guide of the people, the supreme will, the centre of the whole political existence; it is the revelation of God, through which He reigns; the Law is, therefore, the only standard of the theocracy. It was only in exceptional cases, that the will of God interfered directly in the affairs of the nation through lots or through the Urim and Thummim (see notes to the various laws, chap. xx—xxiii.). But Israel is holy only in so far, and because it stands under the immediate influence of God; the people itself has no majesty except that which reflects upon it by the holiness of God; the dignity of the community rises, the more it approaches God; it is destroyed by idolatry and disbelief. A crime against the *majesty of the people*, as such, is therefore unknown to the Mosaic law; it becomes punishable only when its purport and tendency is directed against God Himself, and thus assumes the character of high treason. And because all Israelites are subjects of the same eternal and perfect King, they are all equal in dignity, in rights and duties; there is no difference of classes, of ranks, or castes; all citizens enjoy unlimited liberty and scope for the development of their spiritual nature; no barrier excludes the poorest to rise, by the power of the mind, to the highest authority, even that of a prophet; for a degradation of one class would have annihilated the holiness of the people as an undivided community. But that liberty could never degenerate into anarchy or disorder, as long as the nature of their common Monarch, whose infinite holiness they were ordered to imitate, remained clear before their internal eye; pride and ambition were

the people, and laid before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him. 8. And all the people an-

naturally checked by the thought, how unspeakably remote even the highest human perfection must inevitably be from that eternal model; and the consciousness to be destined as a holy people, far from fostering a feeling of vanity or haughtiness, was eminently calculated to sow daily the seeds of lowliness and humble contrition.—The Israelites were not the only people who had a theocratical form of government; the Egyptian kings also pretended to rule in the name and as the representatives of the gods, and so even at present the monarchs of Persia and Thibet. But these theocracies had, and have, no influence on the position and character of the *people*; the monarchs assumed their presumptuous titles, only to raise *themselves* and to degrade *their nations*; the heathen theocracies were, therefore, but other names for the most absolute despotism, and the sources of the grossest abuse and the darkest superstition, whilst the Hebrew theocracy had an immediate, ennobling influence upon the citizens, whom it elevated into the rank of priests, and who enjoyed all the same political and religious privileges; it consisted merely in the one elevating idea, that God, invisible, omniscient, and eternal, hovered over the people; that the king was but the first servant of the Lord; and that both the people and the king had to render account for all their deeds before His supreme tribunal. The Hebrew theocracy was thus also widely different from a hierarchy, or government of priests, who had, constitutionally, no political power whatever (see note on ver. 22); the tribe of Levi furnished merely the priests, not the Judges and kings, not even necessarily the prophets; it was not in the exclusive possession of the knowledge of the law, and could therefore not acquire any dangerous spiritual ascendancy; it was, on the other hand, the only tribe which obtained no landed property, and it was thus deprived of the chief means of gaining material

influence. How different was all this in the Egyptian caste of priests!—As God reminds here (in ver. 4) the people, through Moses, that they have seen themselves all miracles, and that they could, therefore, not doubt of a special providence exercised in their favour, we insert the following excellent passage from *Stollberg's History of Religion* (ii. p. 58): "If Minos, the legislator of the Cretans, pretended to have every nine years communions with Jupiter in a cavern; if Lycurgus, the legislator of the Lacedæmonians, raised his influence by an oracle of Apollo; and Numa, Rome's second king, supported his authority by a feigned intercourse with the nymph Egeria, who he said instructed him in a grotto near her fountain; if Zamolxis, the lawgiver of the Getae, ascribed his wisdom to Vesta; and Odin carried constantly with him the embalmed head of Mimer, to whom he imputed oracular inspirations; if Manko-Kapak spread the belief, that he descended from the sun, in order to enlighten Peru's people; and Mohammed listened to the wisdom, which his dove whispered into his ear, as Sertorius, in Lusitania, followed the secret suggestions of his hind; all these extraordinary men understood well, that a certain divine authority was required, to diffuse new systems and new ideas among whole nations, and to make them act in accordance therewith. What those men effected very imperfectly by more or less gross illusions, was executed by God, whom the whole of nature obeys, in a manifest and awful manner, by perpetually continued wonders, witnessed by a whole nation."—It is here, perhaps, the place also for briefly enumerating and characterizing the different names of Israel as a people, and in its relation to God. 1. Israel is the *son of God*, because they acknowledge Him as the father of mankind, and the Author of the universe (Exod. iv. 23; Jer. iii. 19; Deut. xxxiii. 6. Mal. ii. 10, etc.). 2. Israel is

swered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people to the Lord. 9. And the Lord said to Moses, Behold, I come to thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe in thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people to the Lord.—10. And the Lord said to Moses, Go to the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes: 11. And be ready for the third day: for

His *firstborn son*, because they were His earliest worshippers (Exod. iv. 22; see our note there), or, with a similar metaphor, the *first-fruits of His increase* (Jer. ii. 3). 3. It is the *people of God*, because He is their king and ruler (Num. xvii. 6); or 4. His *inheritance*, which belongs to Him for ever (Deut. iv. 20; Ps. xxxiii. 12, etc.), for He has *acquired* them as His property by manifold acts of love, especially by the Egyptian redemption (see on xv. 13). 5. His *peculiar people* or *treasure*, which He has singled out among all nations to propagate His truth (xix. 5, etc.), and therefore *Israel*, the *warrior of God*; 6. The *people par excellence*, since they are, as the reverers of His will, the most glorious nation on earth (Deut. xxxiii. 29; 2 Sam. vii. 23); a *great people* (Deut. iv. 6, 7, 8). 7. The Israelites are in the same sense, the *chosen* ones, whom God shields with particular care and His special providence (Isa. lxxv. 9; Ps. cv. 6); or 8. His *flock*, which He pastures and protects (Jer. xiii. 17; xxiii. 1), and God Himself is the shepherd (Ps. lxxx. 2, etc.). 9. They are the *holy people*, because God their king is holy (Lev. xi. 44; xx. 7, 8, etc.); or a *kingdom of priests* (see on ver. 6). 10. The *wise people*, because the law of the Lord enlightens the mind (Deut. iv. 5—8), as, on the contrary, the idolators are denominated *foolish* or *blinded* (Ps. xiv. 1; lxxiv. 8, etc.). 11. The *pious* or *righteous people*, because they know the precepts of God, which ennoble the soul (Ps. xiv. 5; Num. xxiii. 10, etc.), and therefore Jeshurun, the pious nation; or

with a poetical simile, the *turtle-dove* of God (Ps. lxxiv. 19), whereas, on the other hand, the pagans, are called *the wicked* (Ps. ix. 6, 18; x. 4, 11, etc.). 12. The *humble, meek, and lowly*, who modestly submit to the divine precepts (Ps. ix. 10, 11, 13, etc.), in opposition to the heathens, who are called *the rebellious*, because they revolt against God's will (Ps. lxxviii. 19; compare Ps. ii. 1, 2, etc.). But 13. the most developed and, perhaps, one of the most beautiful allegories concerning the relation between God and Israel, is that of the sacred matrimonial alliance. God is the husband or the father; the people is the wife or the mother; the individual citizens, the children; the whole of Israel, the house or family of God (Hos. viii. 1, etc.); and therefore idolatry is, from another point of view, nothing less than adultery, and every idol a *strange* god (compare Isa. i. 21; Jer. ii. 2, 25; li. 5; Hos. v. 7; Ps. xlv. 21, etc., etc.).—All these appellations are convincing proofs of the pure spirituality with which God is conceived and represented throughout the whole Old Testament; and if we find a distinct and self-conscious opposition between Israel and the other nations, this expresses nothing more than an undeniable historical truth, and is neither the dictate of pride, nor of national exclusiveness (see note on vi. 7).

7—9. Moses now proposes, through the elders, the question, to the people, whether they were willing to conclude the renewed covenant with God under the condition of a perfect obedience to His commands, and they answered una-

on the third day the Lord will come down before the eyes of all the people upon Mount Sinai. 12. And thou shalt set bounds to the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, *that you go not* up into the mountain, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mountain shall surely be put to death: 13. There shall not a hand touch ¹him, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether *it be* beast or man, it shall not live. When the

¹ *Engl. Vers.—It.*

nimously with a hearty affirmative (compare xxiv. 3). The people are permitted free choice, either to accept or to refuse the new covenant; the obligation is made perfectly mutual; and so Israel submits, with voluntary consent, to the rule of God, and to His laws; their liberty and free agency is thus secured and respected, and, however severe some of the laws might be, however decided the government of God might, in some instances, appear, they cannot complain of tyrannical arbitrariness; they have declared, consciously and deliberately, that they agree with the conditions proposed to them. It is, therefore, the most unhappy mistake, if some writers, even men with historical and philosophical impartiality, have spoken of the "theocratical despotism of the Mosaic law."—Moses returns the reply of the people to the Lord, who descends to him in a cloud, before the eyes of the people, that all might henceforth firmly believe in the mission and holiness of Moses (ver. 9; compare Deut. xiii. 2, *et seq.*); and here he communicated to God the answer of the people; so that the repetition of the same words, in ver. 9 does not indicate a *double* answer.—God spoke to Moses *in a thick cloud*, "whilst the cloud sent forth thunder and lightning, the signs of divine presence."

10, 11. As God intends now to appear to the people in all His glory, in order to grant the light of truth to the chosen people, they must prepare themselves for this most solemn act of their history, by internal and external sanctifi-

cation (ver. 10), and by abstaining from all sensual and earthly enjoyments (ver. 15). And in order to fill the minds of the people with a still deeper impression of the sanctity of the revelation, they are, under penalty of death, forbidden, either to ascend the mountain, or to approach it (ver. 12; compare xxxiv. 3); for God intended, as a spirit, to reveal Himself to their *spirits* only. The whole succeeding description of the fiery appearance of God, in lightning and thunder, and clouds, and the smoke of Sinai, and the terrible sound of the trumpet, is so majestically sublime and grand, that it could only issue from a mind which, overwhelmed by the omnipotence, and grandeur, and majesty of God, exhausts the whole scanty store of human language to utter but a faint expression of the agitated sentiments of his soul.—The *sanctification* took place among the Hebrews always before a great and solemn act (compare Gen. xxxv. 2; Josh. iii. 5), in order thus to enhance the internal elevation by the external purity; but this virtue of purity is generally raised, among the Orientals, to the importance of a religious duty (see note on iii. 5). The two days of preparation are, according to tradition, the fourth and fifth of Sivan (see *supra*, on vers. 1, 2), whilst, on the following day, the sixth of the same month, the revelation took place (ver. 11).—"God will descend," that is, He will manifest His presence to the people by thunder, lightning and fire.

13. So severely was a profane approach to the mountain interdicted

trumpet ¹soundeth, they shall go forward to the mountain. —14. And Moses went down from the mountain to the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes. 15. And he said to the people, Be ready for the third day; do not approach a woman.—16. And it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a heavy cloud upon the mountain, and the voice of the trumpet exceedingly strong; so that all who *were* in the camp trembled. 17. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp towards God; and they placed themselves at the nether part of the mountain. 18. And Mount Sinai was

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Soundeth long.

during the divine appearance, that those who transgressed this command, and thus forfeited their lives, were not even allowed to be touched; but, from afar, they were to be killed with stones, or pierced with arrows; to kill them on the spot would have compelled the people to follow them to the sacred locality; for the Sinai was now considered as the dwelling-place of God, the Most Holy, and only the most distinguished of the community were permitted to approach it on the command of God; and in order to make Moses again known and revered as the true servant of God, he was now alone allowed to ascend to that habitation of the divine presence. — *When the trumpet soundeth, they shall go forward to the mountain.* We have, in the larger edition, proved from the Hebrew text, that this is the only possible translation of this passage; and remark here only, that the personal pronoun *they* cannot, as Ebn Ezra, and others, believe, refer to Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders (xxiv. 1), as Nadab, Abihu, and the elders, are not even alluded to in the preceding narrative of our chapter; it must, rather, be referred to the people, mentioned in ver. 12. However, as the people were expressly, and under penalty of death, forbidden even to approach or touch the mountain during the appearance of God, which yet

took place amidst the blowing of the trumpet (ver. 19), our text cannot possibly intimate, that the people, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, should ascend the mountain, which would be a most strange contradiction, and which fact is, indeed, nowhere hinted at in the following narrative. We must, rather, suppose, that the words: "they shall go to the mountain," are identical with the circumstance related in ver. 17, namely, that Moses, when the Schofar sounded loud, led the Israelites from the camp "to the foot of the mountain" (see also Deut. iv. 11), of course beyond the boundary which Moses had fixed (ver. 12).

14. Moses sanctified the people, that is, he impressed upon them the sanctity and sublimity of the approaching revelation, and thus hallowed their minds.

15. Among almost all ancient nations, abstinence from conjugal intercourse before the performance of certain holy duties was a religious command. This is reported by Herodotus concerning the Babylonians, Arabians, and the Egyptians. The same was the practice among the Greeks and the Romans, and is still now among the Mohammedans, when they visit the holy places of Mecca.

16. We refrain from analyzing the single features, and the progress of the signs under which God's majesty revealed

entirely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. 19. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded louder and louder very much, Moses spoke, and God answered him by a voice. 20. And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain: and the Lord called Moses *up* to the top of the mountain; and Moses went up. 21. And the Lord said to Moses, Go down, ²warn the people, lest they break through to the Lord to see, and many of them perish. 22. And let the priests also, who come near the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord

² *Engl. Vers.*—Charge.

itself to the overwhelmed people in that solitary wilderness, convinced that the simple, yet most vigorous and impressive, description of the holy text cannot fail to produce a powerful effect upon the mind of the susceptible reader (see on ver. 10). We need, therefore, scarcely point out the absurdity of the opinion, that Moses availed himself of an *earthquake*, with volcanic eruptions, to force laws upon the terrified people, in the name of the deity. The “trembling of the mountain” (ver. 18) is sufficiently accounted for by the vehement thunder, and is a usual image of the mighty appearance of God (Ps. xviii. 8, etc). As the only illustration, we quote here the parallel passage from Deut. iv. where several points, here but briefly alluded to, are more distinctly developed. Ver. 11: “And you approached, and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire to the very heart of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick clouds. Ver. 12: And the Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire: *you heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; you heard only a voice.* Ver. 13: And He declared to you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, ten commandments; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone. Ver. 15: Take you therefore, good heed to yourselves; for you saw no manner of similitude on the

day that the Lord spoke to you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire. Ver. 33: Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?” (see ver. 36).

17. See note on ver. 13.

18. *And Mount Sinai was entirely in smoke.* Those dense clouds from which thunders broke forth had the appearance of smoke.

19. *By a voice;* that is, Moses spoke to God (ver. 21—24), and God answered with a voice loud enough to surpass the sound of the trumpet; not “in thunder,” as some explain.

20. We need scarcely remark, that all expressions here used with reference to God, and all actions ascribed to Him, are only employed by the inspired writer to make himself understood by man, and to convey, by external notices, a faint idea of the spiritual and supernatural workings of the Eternal.

22. Difficult is here the introduction of the *priests*, as only in xxviii. 1, the sons of Aaron are appointed to priestly functions. Therefore, many Jewish interpreters, as Ebn Ezra, Rashi, Rashbam, and others, have taken the *priests* here, as the *first-born*, who are, according to xiii. 2, particularly holy, and consecrated to God, and in whose place, only later, the Levites were chosen as the peculiar priestly tribe (Numb. viii. 14).

break forth upon them. 23. And Moses said to the Lord, The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for Thou hast warned us, saying, Set bounds about the mountain, and sanctify it. 24. And the Lord said to him, Go, descend, and come up again, thou and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up to the Lord, lest He break forth upon them. 25. So Moses went down to the people, and spoke to them.

But, in xxiv. 5., young men are also mentioned, charged to perform sacrifices, and they exercised, therefore, sacerdotal functions, whether they were from the family of Aaron or not. Worthy of consideration is the opinion of Vater, that, as no doubt the prohibition not to approach the mountain was in power for the whole time of the legislation, it included the priests here also, as they were appointed during that time (xxviii. 1. *et seq.*). The priests are then commanded, like the people, to keep themselves holy, that is, not to come near the mountain of God, "lest the Lord break forth upon them," that is, as Targ. Onkelos translates, "lest He kill them." In this verse, as in ver. 24, the priests are, in all respects, subjected to the same regulations as the people, and enjoy no preference whatever over the latter. Philo already deduces, from this circumstance, the perfect equality of all men before God, which principle he finds particularly in every injunction of the decalogue. Moses and Aaron alone are the special servants of the deity, and the mediators between Him and His people.

21. The reverential and modest distance at which the people should keep them-

selves from the mountain, was considered so important, that Moses was commanded to warn them, once more, not to approach it during the divine manifestation, beyond the fixed boundary, if they wished to escape a certain death.

25. From ver. 24, it appears that, after Moses had exhorted the people once more, he ascended the mountain with Aaron, and remained there whilst God proclaimed the Ten Commandments; then he returned to the people, who asked him henceforth to speak to them himself, for they feared the awfulness of the divine visions (xx. 16; Deut. v. 20-24); upon which Moses ascended the mountain again (ver. 18), and received the further ordinances (xx. 18; Deut. v. 28); but the people remained, during this time, quietly in their tents (Deut. v. 27). When then Moses returned from the mountain, he communicated the laws to the people (xxiv. 3), after, however, having received the command from God, to appear again with Aaron, his two eldest sons, and the seventy elders of Israel (xxiv. 1). Thus, all parts of the sacred narrative stand in harmony and logical connection (see also on xxiv. 1).

CHAPTER XX.

SUMMARY.—The Ten Commandments are proclaimed by God. The people terrified by the fearful majesty of the divine presence, wishes in future to receive the precepts of God through the mediation of Moses. He explains to them the reason, why God had this time manifested Himself in such glory and splendour. Then Moses ascends the mountain again, and receives from God the individual laws, which constitute the "Book of the Covenant" (see on xxi. 1-11).

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS. VER. 1-14.

GENERAL REMARKS.

THE first fourteen verses contain the primary basis of revelation and the fundamental laws of the whole Mosaic legislation. They have, therefore, become the starting-point

of all religious systems and of all true civilization, and from their promulgation only dates the diffusion of a genuine monotheism, a purely internal morality and a sound enlightenment. They form a decisive epoch in the history of the human race, and are, therefore, perhaps the greatest and most important event in universal history. In a simple and condensed, yet extremely emphatical form, equally impressive for every degree and manner of intellectual culture, a complete system of duties is comprised, which man owes to his Creator and his fellow-men; and so comprehensive is the purport of these words, that already from the earliest times the whole sum of the divine precepts has been considered to be included in them as in an embryo, so that all the other laws are only to be regarded as the development or detailed elaboration of these words, wherefore they are by Hebrew tradition justly called the "fundamentals of the faith," or the "pillars of the Law and its roots." It may even be asserted, that the ritual observances are nothing but a visible embodiment of the general truths here pronounced, and that the civil and political institutions coincide, in their meaning and essence, with the moral axioms here enjoined.—However, the attempts really to deduce from these doctrines all the various precepts and prohibitions of the Pentateuch, must naturally lead to very forced and artificial results, as the subordination of the individual laws under the fundamental precepts is frequently very difficult; the latter are only intended to indicate the spirit in which the legislation is conceived, and the intellectual direction, which it would take in its future development. They are, then, to be considered as the basis of the *theocracy*; and we shall, therefore, be obliged to examine the Ten Commandments under a twofold point of view; 1st. In what manner they affect the *supremacy of God*; and 2nd. How far they concern the existence and safety of the *political community*.

As a *system* they might briefly be thus delineated. Naturally and simply our duties are divided into those towards *God*, those towards our *fellow-men*, and those towards *ourselves*; but the latter are necessarily excluded from a system of laws, intended only to enforce the first general conditions of theocratical and political life. Now, the basis and foundation of theocracy is the unconditional belief in the *existence* of God, with the utter exclusion of every other deity; for God is the invisible king of the country. (*First Commandment*).—But an uncivilized nation may hardly be able to conceive and to worship God as a pure *spirit*; and may, therefore, easily incline to represent to itself some corporeal form of God, by which, however, His innermost nature would be destroyed. It was, therefore, necessary severely to prohibit every visible image of God. (*Second Commandment*).—Not less would the profanation of His name gradually produce indifference to His attributes and derogation of His holy essence; and therefore the *sanctity* of His name was strictly to be enjoined. (*Third Commandment*).—For the practical inurement to these difficult doctrines, incessant instruction and edification were required; and this could only be effectually obtained on a *day of perfect rest*. (*Fourth Commandment*).—Thus is, in fact, the First Commandment the only and principal precept of the worship of God, while the three following injunctions are but auxiliary measures to secure and to strengthen its observance.—Here the first tablet might have concluded; but precisely in the midst between the divine and human duties, stand the *filial* obligations; for the parents share, in many respects, the divine authority (see *infra*). Therefore is the Fifth Commandment very properly the centre of all the others; for upwards it is the point of departure for the divine, and downwards for the human duties.

But our offences against our fellow-men consist—1st, in a violation *by deed*; 2nd, *by word*; or 3rd, *by thought*. Now the deed may be directed a) against the *person*, or b) against the *property* of the neighbour. Therefore the *Sixth Commandment* prohibits *murder*, and the *Eighth, theft*. Between person and property, and constituting a higher holy possession, stands the wedded wife, and therefore the *Seventh Commandment* interdicts *adultery*. Further, the violation by

word is treated in the *Ninth Commandment*, which denounces the *false witness*; and by *thought*, in the *Tenth*, the coveting of the property of others—and thus the whole system of the *social duties* is perfectly completed; and the conscientious observance of the decalogue sufficed, therefore, to secure the permanency of the spiritual and civil common-wealth.—We might discover in the precepts of the first tablets the same trichotomy of deed, word, and thought, although in a reversed order; namely, the First and Second Commandments enjoin obviously the divine veneration with the heart, the Third with the word and the Fourth with the deed; and so the decalogue begins with the heart and ends with the heart; for this is the only source of our actions and our thoughts; as, on the other hand, all our actions and all our thoughts redound to the heart and stamp it with their impress,—there is an eternal reciprocity between our feeling, thinking and acting.

As the decalogue contains only the outlines of the legislation, and, according to Rabbinical explanation, even those laws only, the transgression of which was punished with death, it will be sufficient, in the following remarks, merely to point out the general character of these precepts with regard to the two considerations above mentioned, reserving the more detailed expositions for future occasions (see the laws about *murder*, on xxi. 12—14; *adultery*, on xxii. 15, 16; *theft*, on xxi. 37; *legal witnesses*, on xxiii. 1—3).

The contents of the first fourteen verses of our chapter are, in several passages of the Pentateuch, designated the “ten words” (xxxiv. 28; Deut. iv. 13; x. 4), and have, therefore, been called by Philo, Josephus, and others, *Decalogue* (Δεκάλογος). But nowhere is a clue given as to the division of those verses into the “ten words.” Therefore, a variety of opinions prevailed on this subject from early times; they may, however, now be reduced to the following three views: 1. According to the Talmud, Targum Jonathan, Ebn Ezra, Maimonides, Peter Martyr, and others, ver. 2 contains the first commandment; vers. 3—6, the second; ver. 7, the third; vers. 8—11, the fourth; ver. 12, the fifth; ver. 13, the sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth; and ver. 14, the tenth. But, against this division militates the circumstance, that, polytheism and image-worship are two distinct subjects, and cannot be combined in one precept. 2. Others do not admit that ver. 2 is a commandment, as it simply asserts, that God, who now reveals Himself, has released the Israelites from Egypt; they consider, therefore, this verse merely as an introduction, and believe ver. 3 to be the first commandment; vers. 4—6, the second; and then, farther, as specified above. Thus Origen, Jerome, Pseudo-Ambrose, and the Reformed Churches (Calvin, Pseudo-Athanasius, etc., etc.), except the Lutheran. But ver. 2 evidently belongs to the decalogue; and we shall, in its due place, prove that the simple form of an assertion, in which it is worded, cannot exclude it therefrom. 3. Luther, Pfeiffer, and others, take vers. 2—6 together as *one* commandment; but, in order to gain the number ten, they divide ver. 14 into two commandments: *a.* Thou shalt not covet the house of thy neighbour; *b.* the remaining words of the verse. This is also the Masoretic division in Exodus. But it is unquestionable, that ver. 14 forms one commandment, as the house of the neighbour belongs quite as much to the individual enumeration of the forbidden objects, as his wife, his servant, or his cattle. Therefore, the opinion of those deserves scarcely to be mentioned, who, with regard to Deuteronomy v. 18, take the words: “thou shalt not covet the wife of thy neighbour,” as the ninth commandment, and the other words of the verse as the tenth precept. So Augustin, Bede, and Peter Lombard. If we carefully examine the contents of these verses, we arrive at the conclusion, that the division of Origen is the most suitable and most logical; but, with the necessary modification, that the *second* and *third* verses form the first commandment. This division is already adopted by Josephus (Antiq. III. v. 5), who writes: “The first commandment teaches us, that there is but one God, and that we ought to worship Him only; the second commands us not to make the image of

any living thing to worship it." The objection, which Ebn Ezra and others after him have raised against the separation of the third and fourth verse, namely, that polytheism and worship of images are identical, does not appear tenable; for it is not impossible for a people to believe in one omnipotent God, and yet to make images of Him.

These "ten words" were, after the testimony of the Pentateuch itself, written on two stone tablets, which were called "the two tablets of the covenant" (Deut. iv. 13; iv. 9, 11), and which were preserved in the "ark of the covenant" (Deut. x. 8), as the decalogue itself was called "the words of the covenant" (Deut. ix. 13; compare xxviii. 69). How many commandments stood on either of the tablets is again uncertain. Both Origen and Augustin commence the second table with verse 12; so that, according to Origen, the first tablet contains four commandments, and the second, six; according to Augustin, the first three, the second, seven. But more probable is the ancient division of Josephus and Philo, who place five commandments on either tablet, so that the second begins with verse 13. And, as both sides were written upon (xxxii. 15), Josephus asserts, that two and a half were contained on each side; which is, however, problematical, as we cannot well suppose that the words: "Thou shalt not steal," forming the eighth commandment, were separated. Thus the first tablet comprises our duties towards God; the second, our obligations towards our fellow-men; but so that the fifth commandment—the veneration of the parents—forms the transition between both tablets, since the parents are, for the children on the one hand, inferior to the Deity, on the other hand, more sacred than all the other human beings; they are, as it were, the earthly representatives of God; they instruct the children in the fear of God and in virtue, like a heavenly prophet.

It is worthy of being remarked, that only in the two first commandments God is introduced in the first person, whilst, in the two following verses He is mentioned in the third person. Rabbinical expounders assign, as a reason for this circumstance, that the people were, after the two first commandments, unable to bear the fearfulness of the divine majesty and voice, and that, therefore, Moses communicated to them, later, the following words which he had heard alone. But the holy text states, distinctly, that God revealed to the Israelites, without mediator, the Ten Commandments, amidst fire and thunder (vers. 1, 19; Deut. iv. 13, 14). And Ebn Ezra justly remarks, that God speaks, in many passages, of Himself, in the third person (compare xix. 21), and that transitions from the first person into the third are not unfrequent.

It is known that the decalogue, in its repetition in Deuteronomy (v. 6—18), contains, from the third commandment, several more or less important deviations, a subject which is not without peculiar difficulties, but the full elucidation of which is more in its proper place in the quoted section of Deuteronomy. Here we remark only, that a careful consideration of the matter leads to the following conclusions: 1st. The difference of the *words* in both decalogues is perfectly unessential, as they cause, in no instance, a difference of the *sense*: 2nd, the wording in Exodus is the original one, as it was revealed to Moses, and engraved on the tablets of the covenant: 3rd, the Book of Deuteronomy contains only a brief historical sketch of events, already related before with more elaborate detail; and the general sense only, not the exact words of the previous narrative must be expected: thus we can easily account for the difference of the decalogue in Deuteronomy, which, in fact, refers twice to the former version in Exodus ("as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee," vers. 12 and 16).

As we stand here at the entrance of the whole legislation, we deem it expedient to premise the following remarks of the great Ebn Ezra, as they concisely embody the principles which have guided us in the exposition of the Mosaic laws: "Know that all commandments can be considered under one of the following two points of view. The first class comprises such laws as are by God implanted in the heart of every

man of sound judgment; they are very numerous, and in the decalogue it is only the precept concerning the Sabbath which is not suggested by reason alone. Therefore, all intelligent persons, of all nations, admit and practise those laws; and it is impossible to increase or to diminish them; even Abraham had already, besides others, observed them. *And God has given the Law to men of intelligence only, and those who have no intelligence have no Law.* The second class contains the precepts, which are obscure to us, and the reasons of which are not explained in the Law. Far, far be from us the thought, that there can exist a single law in opposition to reason; but if a precept seems to us irreconcilable with our understanding, we must, nevertheless, faithfully observe it; it is, however, our duty, not to accept it blindly, but to search in the writings of the sages after its reason, whether it is, perhaps, to be understood in a figurative sense; and if we find there no satisfactory information, we must reflect and study ourselves to find an explanation; but if we can, in spite of our anxious researches, not find any clue, then only let us drop the matter, and acknowledge that we do not understand it."

AND God spoke all these words, saying, 2. *I am the Lord thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.* 3. Thou

FIRST TABLE.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.—THE EXISTENCE AND UNITY OF GOD (VERS. 2, 3).

The disobedience of the people of Israel had already, in the few trials which they had suffered, displayed itself on more than one occasion. If it was, therefore, intended to procure for the laws of Moses the least access to the minds of the people, it was of primary importance to counteract, and, if possible, to eradicate their disbelief. To effect this great end, the words were proclaimed: "I am the Lord thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." This was an event which they all had experienced and witnessed, in which they all had obviously seen God's power, wisdom and providence, and which had powerfully manifested to them His omnipotence and His justice. In this respect, that verse constitutes, as it were, the *historical basis* of the legislation, the positive foundation on which the great edifice of the legislative system of Moses was erected. Ancient Jewish philosophers already have raised the question, why God did not rather designate Himself here by the majestic title of Creator of Heaven and Earth. This query was, for instance, addressed by Rabbi Jehudah Halevi, the celebrated author of the book Cusari, to Ebn Ezra, who

answers, in a somewhat mystical manner, that in the *accelerated* redemption of Israel from Egypt, which would, after the constellation of the stars, have taken place much later, the love of God for His people manifested itself most distinctly; but remarks, also, that the ways by which men acquire knowledge, are very different according to the degree of their intellectual faculties, and that, therefore, Israel, which was then only in the infancy of its spiritual development, would hardly have understood, with equal clearness, so abstract a notion as that of the Lord of the Universe, whereas, that of the Deliverer from Egypt, must have been intelligible and palpable to all. Besides, the release from Egypt obliged Israel to accept the whole Law, whilst the creation would have pointed only to a religion of nature, incumbent upon all men. Further, the Mosaic legislation required a sound fundamental principle, calculated to pervade it, and to combine all its parts by a bond of unity; and that principle is only and exclusively the existence of one eternal almighty God, who protects Israel — and therefore again must the legislation begin with our words. But as the doctrine of mono-

shalt have no other gods besides me.—4. Thou shalt not make to thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any*

theism is a spiritual and moral axiom, innate in the heart of man, and inseparable from human nature—which is, in fact, the case with all the Ten Commandments, with the only exception, perhaps, of the fourth (see *supra*)—it was not necessary to express it in the form of a command; the people were, at the beginning of the legislation, merely once more, with emphasis, *reminded* of that doctrine, in order to be the better enabled to follow the law-giver in his further injunctions. In a similar manner the simple affirmation of our verse has already been explained by Nachmanides, in that celebrated dissertation which he held in the year 1263, before the king James of Arragon, in Saragossa, against Fra Paolo. Besides, it is nowhere intimated that this first revelation contained just precepts and prohibitions; they are not called in the Pentateuch *commands*, but simply *words*, or *truths*; and truths are as essential as commands, as they are the *sources* of our duties. Further, it is extremely easy to convert an assertion into a command, and in our verse the precept is naturally implied: “Believe, with an unshaken assurance, in the existence and providence of the God, who has led thee out of the land of servitude.” But every doubt disappears if we take the third verse also to the first commandment, as has been demonstrated above. Thus, the decalogue contains really *ten* commandments, not *nine*, as has been asserted even by some modern interpreters.—As everything in this compendium of revelation is significant, so at the very beginning, the use of the holiest and sublimest name of the deity (*Jehovah*), which had been communicated and explained to the people through Moses (see note on vi. 2), of that God who had, by the redemption from Egypt, verified Himself as the Unchangeable and Eternal. The tenor of the second verse may, further, as some believe, involve the idea, that not only His grandeur and

omnipotence ought to lead the Israelite to worship Him, but also the duty of gratitude which they owe to Him as their rescuer and patron. Less unforced appears the inference of Salvador and others, that by alluding to the redemption “from the house of slaves” the idea of *personal freedom* is here proclaimed as the supreme political principle (see note on xix. 6).—It follows, as a simple and natural consequence of the worship of the God of Israel, who was even to the patriarchs, already known as Creator of Heaven and Earth, who fills the universe with His glory, that besides Him no other deity can exist, that, therefore, all beings which are adored by other nations are *nonentities*. Thus the second and third verse are closely connected. The Israelites are warned not to follow the perverse custom of the heathens, who worshipped, besides their principal deity, the gods of other nations also, in order to propitiate these also for themselves.—This prohibition not to serve any deity besides God, is in different passages, directed against Sabeism, or worship of celestial orbs (Deut. iv. 19); the *Mas-kith stones* (Lev. xxv. 1); the gods of the heathen nations (Exod. xxiii. 24, etc.); their very names were not to be mentioned (Exod. xxiii. 13); their altars, sacred groves and statues in Palestine were to be destroyed and burnt (Exod. xxiii. 24; xxxiv. 13, etc.); the precious metals of which the idols were made are cursed, and, therefore, not to be taken as a possession (Deut. vii. 25, 26); the seven nations of Canaan, who might seduce the Israelites to idolatry, were to be extirpated (Deut. vii. 1); no alliance, no intermarriage with them was to be suffered, since they do everything which is an abomination to the Lord, and even burn their sons and daughters in honour of their gods (Exod. xxxiv. 15, 16; Deut. xii. 29–31, etc.).—And as ver. 3 is a command in its *form*, so is ver. 2, in its *contents*. Thus, the third verse adds

thing that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: 5. Thou

to the idea an exceedingly important notion: *the unity* of God. The worship of nature, and every other kind of idolatry, necessarily divide the power and perfection of the deity in many parts, as each of the heathen gods has only one limited sphere of action allotted to him, and the afflicted heart of the sufferer turned doubtfully now to this deity, now to another, uncertain "whence the help should come for him." But as the God of Israel excludes all other deities besides Himself, who is omnipotent and omniscient; He fills alone the human mind, and moves it with unlimited love and adoration; and thus already the first command involves the highest and greatest of all principles of our duties towards God: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,

and with all thy might" (Deut. vi. 5); for that love shall not be divided, but concentrated into one powerful and kindling focus. It follows naturally from the theocratical character of the decalogue, that the violation of this commandment, the worship of any other deity besides the God of Israel, is a crime to be punished with death (see on xxii. 19; compare Deut. xvii. 2—7). The same rigorous punishment falls even upon those who try to persuade others, be they even their nearest relatives, to forsake the God of Israel (Deut. xiii. 7—12); and a Hebrew city which has openly professed to serve other gods, is entirely to be burnt, both its inhabitants, and its property (Deut. xiii. 13—18), which law has, however, been mitigated by Rabbinical interpretation.

SECOND COMMANDMENT.—INTERDICTION OF IMAGES AND IDOLS.
INCORPOREALITY OF GOD. VERS. 4—6.

Not only should the God of the redemption from Egypt, and He only be believed, His adoration should also be perfectly spiritual, for He is a spirit Himself; every corporeality should be banished, because He also is incorporeal, not to be represented with the external senses, but to be conceived with the soul and felt with the heart. The Israelites had during the revelation only heard a voice, but seen no figure (see note on xix. 6), lest they be tempted to impute to Him material qualities. Even images of the Eternal must soon lead to erroneous notions about His attributes, and thus, by a natural concatenation, to idolatrous worship; and therefore the second commandment prohibits every representation of any object whatever for religious purposes most severely; and the subsequent history of Israel teaches us, that even the worship of the golden calf, although it was intended as a symbol of God, was punished with the most fearful chastisement (see xxxii. 26—29).—From the same reason, the

image of the Danites, although it was intended for the worship of the God of Israel, and the two golden calves of Jeroboam, were against the injunction of our commandment, and affected the very groundwork of the Mosaic law (Judges xviii. 30, compared with xvii. 13; 1 Kings xii. 28). The Israelites were, then, forbidden to make any *image*. But not only such a gross idol (εἰδωλον, Sept.) was forbidden, but also every figure or form, which the mind shapes to itself easily and freely. That word is the most clearly interpreted by Maimonides (Moreh Neb. i. 3): "The word 'likeness' is used in three different manners. It denotes, namely, 1. The external, visible, objective quality or shape of a thing (compare Deut. iv. 15, 16). 2. The form or image of a thing, which the human imagination keeps alive, after the object itself has been withdrawn from the senses (compare Job iv. 13); and 3. The characteristic quality of a thing, as it is understood and conceived by the mind; and in this signification it

shalt not bow down to them, nor 'be induced to serve

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Serve them.

is used with respect to God also (Num. xii. 8).” We must take the latter expression here in the second sense as a conception of the imagination. — The text then specifies the objects, the representation of which for idolatrous purposes is interdicted; but they are contained still more distinctly in the following verses (Deut. iv. 15—19): “Take therefore good heed to yourselves; for you saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spoke to you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: Lest you corrupt yourselves, and make to yourselves a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female; the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air; the likeness of anything that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth: And lest thou lift up thine eyes to heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them, and serve them, whom the Lord thy God hath divided to all nations under the whole heaven.” All the different manners of idolatry here enumerated, were really and extensively practised in the land, which the Israelites had just quitted, and the religious perversities of which they had adopted; and Philo observes in this respect (Decal. xvi): “The Egyptians, besides falling down to statues and images, have also introduced irrational animals, to the honours due to the gods, such as bulls, and rams, and goats, inventing some prodigious fiction with regard to each of them; and as to these particular animals they have indeed some reason for what they do, for they are the most domestic and most useful to life.... But as it is, they go beyond these animals and select the most fierce and untameable of all wild animals, honouring lions and crocodiles, and of reptiles the poisonous asp, with temples, and sacred precincts, and sacrifices, and assemblies, and solemn

processions, and by similar means. For searching in the earth and in the water, which two elements are given by God to man for his use and advantage, after the most fearful animals, they found among the land-animals nothing more savage than the lion, and among the aquatic animals nothing more fierce than the crocodile; and both these animals they honour and worship. But they have also deified many other animals, as the dogs, cats, and wolves; and among the birds, the ibises and the hawk” (see supplementary note to ii. 10, and note to viii. 22).

It may perhaps be admitted, that the prohibition expressed in our verse has exercised a retarding influence upon the progress and development of the plastic arts among the Hebrews, as a similar interdiction of the Koran has produced a similar effect among the Arab tribes: for plastic art, in its beginnings, generally stands in the service of religion, and advances by the stimulus it affords. But it is an incomprehensible mistake, if it is believed that the plastic arts in general, sculpture and painting, are forbidden in our text. Josephus relates that the Jews would not even suffer the image of the emperor which was represented on the eagles of the soldiers, and that a temple of the Tetrarch Herodes in Tiberius was, by decree of the Sanhedrin, burnt down, merely because it was ornamented with figures of animals. Such a barbarous and irrational law could not possibly emanate from a legislator, who commanded and erected a holy tent, furnished with all the adornments of art and beauty, who even ordered two cherubim to be placed in the Holy of Holies (xxv. 18—20; compare xxv. 34; xxi. 32; Num. xxi. 8, 9). In the first temple as well as in the second, was an abundance of plastic works, which nobody has found at variance with the *spirit* of Mosaism. We mention further, the “serpent of brass” which Moses erected (Num. xxi. 9); the golden figures which

them: for I the Lord thy God *am* a 'zealous God, visiting

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Jealous.

the Philistines offered for the holy tabernacle (1 Sam. vi. 17); the "molten sea" in the court of the Solomonian temple, which rested on twelve cast oxen (1 Kings vii. 25); the throne of Solomon, borne and surrounded by fourteen magnificent lions (1 Kings, x. 20). A limited and short-sighted interpretation of the *letter* of the holy text has, in other passages also, led to the most perverse and almost ridiculous results. For the purpose of *religious worship*, no images were to be made; more than this does our text not forbid. The Talmud, although it forbids representations of human images and of celestial orbs, if they are liable to be regarded as idols, allows expressly images of animals, etc., as ornaments.—The water is described as "under the earth," because the beds of the rivers and seas lie lower than the coasts and shores.—In the shorter catechism both of the Lutherans and of the Roman Catholics, the fourth verse is omitted; and it has been asserted that the latter did so from obvious dogmatical motives.

Since idolatry would infect the very root of the new doctrines, and thus undermine the whole stem of the Mosaic legislation; and since it is, by a necessary connection, the beginning of the mental, religious, and political decline of the country (see Lev. xviii. 28; Deut. iv. 25—31); it is forbidden with an intensity applied in no other passage of the Pentateuch, and with reference to no other law. Not only is one of the awful curses pronounced from Mount Ebal directed against him who secretly worships any image, an abomination to the Lord (Deut. xxvii. 15); it is only with regard to idolatry that God calls Himself *a zealous God*, who suffers no other deities besides Himself; and Maimonides observes, that God is only with respect to an idolator called enemy, adversary, and antagonist. And in order to deter with still greater force from the abomination of idolatry, a principle is added, which

belongs to the obscurest and most difficult of the Mosaic theology: "God visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation, to those who hate Him, and shows mercy to thousands, to those who love Him and keep His commandments." It appears to be in opposition to the divine love and justice, that the children should innocently suffer for the crimes of their fathers; and this principle, if really contained in our words, would be a great defect in the system of the Mosaic ethics. But already the directly opposite declarations in other passages of the Old Testament ought to warn us to be circumspect in the exposition of our text. In Deut. xxiv. 16 we read literally: "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin"; and with a verbal reminiscence from this passage we read in 2 Kings xiv. 5, 6: "And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand [of Amaziah], that he slew his servants, who had slain the king his father. But the children of the murderers he slew not: according to that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children," etc. Comp. Ex. xxxii. 33. It is, then, manifest, that our passage must have a similar sense, which, in fact, offers itself unforcedly, if we only refer the words "to those who hate me" to the *children*, not to the *fathers*: God visits the sin of the fathers upon the children, if the latter also trespass His precepts; and quite analogously herewith God blesses the virtuous descendants of the pious: and in this sense Targum Onkelos already adds here the words: "if the children continue to sin like their fathers;" thus also the Talmud. Indeed, if the children see the pernicious consequences of a sin in their father, and yet persevere in it, they suffer justly a

the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generation*, to those who hate me; 6. And

severer punishment, than if they had gone astray by a transitory personal aberration. With this interpretation, the whole Bible stands in perfect harmony. In Gen. xviii. 25, Abraham says: "That be far from Thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from Thee: Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" Not the mere *external* relationship with sinners causes destruction, but the *internal* affinity with them in evil. In Levit. xxvi. 39, 40, God says: "And they who are left of you shall pine away for *their* iniquity in your enemies' lands, and *also* for the iniquity of their fathers *with them* they shall pine away. If they will confess *their* iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers," etc. Then, only if the wickedness of the children *unites* itself with that of the fathers, the former suffer punishment. In the same manner the piety of the fathers alone cannot bring blessings upon the children, unless these walk also in the good paths of their ancestors. The righteousness of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob could not shield the Israelites from difficult trials and great misery.—Jeremiah xxxi. 29, 30, exclaims: "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge, but *they shall say*: Every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge." The prophet combats here the same error, into which many interpreters of our passage have fallen, and expects the time, when all would abandon this dangerous absurdity, which perverts the divine equity into a blind vengeance. From this it is clear, that the same prophet, in xxxii. 18: "Thou showest loving-kindness to thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them," speaks only of such descendants, who imitate the sin of their fathers, who are not only the

bodily, but also the spiritual heirs of their ancestors, as is obvious from vers. 19, 30, 31.—Still more solemnly than Jeremiah rises Ezekiel against that preposterous maxim, and devotes to this subject an elaborate polemical discussion in the eighteenth chapter of his prophecies; and the result is in vers. 20 to 24, thus condensed: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, nor shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked will turn from his sins, which he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not, that he shall return from his ways, and live?" Here is, beyond every misconception, the double principle pronounced: 1. that every one receives the reward of his deeds; and 2. that every sinner, even the children of the impious, if they abandon the bad ways of their fathers, are received by God in love and mercy.—The history of Achan in Joshua vii. cannot be taken into consideration here, as it is an extraordinary case of martial law, which can prove nothing for the usual custom of the people. Martial law is in modern times and countries also very different from the civil law, both in spirit and in practice.—In 2 Sam. xii. 14, not the son of Bathsheba is punished, but David; and the extirpation of the house of Jeroboam (1 Kings xiii. 34; xiv. 10, 17) takes place, because his descendants also were idolators.—Remarkable is the observation of Plutarch which nearly coincides with the doctrine here developed: "If a wicked father begets a virtuous son—as sometimes sickly parents have healthy children—God remits to such a son the punishment which was destined to the race, because he has now

showing mercy to thousands, to those who love me, and keep my commandments. 7. Thou shalt not take the

as it were, passed over from the family of vice to that of virtue. But if the soul retains the (internal) resemblance with the corrupted family, then he must certainly take upon Himself the punishment of vice also like an inherited debt."

Thus is the principle which our text involves, already from this side, as we believe, perfectly justified; but hereto accedes, that in Exod. xxxiv. 7, and Num. xiv. 18, it is enumerated among the divine attributes of love: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children to the third and fourth generation." But it would indeed be no *mercy* on the part of God, to destroy the guiltless children for the iniquities of the fathers; and here offers itself spontaneously the explanation, that the expression "He will not clear the guilty" signifies: *he does not root out*, so that the sense would be: God does not clear off the sin at once, but settles it gradually within three or four generations; lest the individual, crushed by the weight of the punishments, perish. And this is, indeed, an act of divine mercy!—But the sons to the third or fourth generation can the more bear a part of the guilt, as the blessing of thousands, that is, innumerable generations is promised to them, so that this circumstance also is a testimony of the love of God. So far from the truth is the opinion of those, who find in our commandment a proof, that the God of the Old Testament is a God of *revenge*!—Further is the distinction not to be overlooked between the *natural consequences* of many excesses, as prodigality, debauchery, or disreputable conduct of any kind, which are necessarily entailed upon the unhappy children, and the *moral responsibility*, which falls exclusively upon the sinful parents. That

principle of natural consequences is especially obvious in the history of whole nations, where civic and domestic virtues secure and strengthen the state for many generations, whilst moral depravation necessarily accelerates its downfall. In Gen. xv. 16, it is clearly stated, that Canaan could not be conquered earlier than in the fourth generation from Abraham; because then only the measure of the sin of its inhabitants was full; whence it follows distinctly: 1. that the annihilation of the Canaanites was merited on account of their wickedness; and 2. that the natural consequence of that immorality was the unavoidable ultimate decay of their political existence. God is the judge of the whole world; and His justice watches over all nations. — Lastly, Maimonides observes, in the passage above referred to, that the expression: "He visits the iniquity of the father upon the children," applies only to the crime of idolatry and to none else; and thus the operation of that principle is practically limited to a very narrow sphere, and to a sin which, in fact, outweighs all the rest in infatuation, and, especially in a theocratical state, deserves the severest castigation.—The death of the children of the unhappy Naboth proves as little a contrary practice among the Israelites as the exceptional case of Achan above referred to. The deed against the innocent Naboth himself was an atrocious murder committed by the idolatrous and impious Jezebel; her sanguinary measures are severely re-proved, and a fearful death ended prematurely her nefarious career (1 Ki. xxi. 7; 2 Ki. ix. 26). About the rigorous punishment threatened for the least approach to idolatry, see on xxii. 17. To sum up the arguments in support of the doctrine of our text, we repeat: 1. It applies only to such children, as follow the sins of their fathers. 2. It is intended as a merciful act of gradual, almost imperceptible punishment during several generations. 3. It is clear in itself as to the

name of the Lord thy God ¹for falsehood; for the Lord

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—In vain.

natural consequences of many immoral actions; and 4. It applies only to the crime of idolatry.

We shall now briefly state and examine the other principal opinions advanced on this subject. *Grotius* says: "God threatens, in the Mosaic law, to visit the impiety of the fathers upon the descendants: but He has right and dominion both over our property and our lives." But, by such remarks, our doctrine is not illustrated, but still more veiled; and thus would happiness and misery, life and death, be torn from every connection with the human actions. (Compare the similar reason, advanced by others, on iii. 22).—*Michaelis* believes, that the punishment, alluded to in our text, is the *leprosy*, which generally propagates itself to the third and fourth generation. But it would not only have been strange to threaten such natural extension of a bodily evil as a peculiar divine punishment, but that disease is a calamity by which the children of the good, and the virtuous children of the wicked, are equally visited. The same writer remarks, in his commentary on our passage, that here temporal evils only are alluded to: "In this manner the children, on whom God visits the sin of the fathers, suffer no wrong, and yet do the fathers feel pangs. For temporal bliss or woe are not always dispensed by Providence according to merit; and if the children fear God, the evil inflicted upon them will be to them a means of moral correction; but, if they follow their wicked father, it befalls them as a well-merited punishment." But temporal evils, as disease, pain, and misfortune, are, at least after the notions of the ancients, chastisements, since the reward also consists mostly of temporal blessings, long life, a good and numerous progeny, and the like.—According to *Rosenmüller*, our maxim has its origin in the practice of Oriental princes, who often order the extermination of the whole family of the aggressor. It is true, that we have many

and authentic instances of such usage; thus says *Cicero*: "Herein lies the cruelty, that the children, who have committed nothing, must bear the punishment. But that is a custom both ancient and common to all nations," and he adds, as its reason, "that the love to their children might make the parents more anxious for the interests of the state." *Thevenot* (*Trav.* vi. p. 577) writes, concerning the pearl-fisheries of Persia: "All pearls, which weigh half a medical or more, belong to the king, and the fisher who brings them receives a rich present. But if a fisher embezzles pearls, and sells them into other countries, the king, if he is informed of it, punishes with death the whole family and the relatives of the fisher, men and women, even to the *seventh degree*." Plato, Alexander the Great, and Seneca, strongly denounce this barbarous custom, which, however, had taken too deep root in ancient states. But after the arguments above adduced, which prove that the "visiting of the sin of the fathers upon the children" is a *mercy* of God, who wishes to rescue even the fathers from entire destruction, in order, no doubt, to leave them an opportunity of repenting, we cannot, in the remotest sense, think of an annihilation both of ancestors and descendants.—The foregoing remarks imply, further, a sufficient refutation of Warburton's opinion, that the principle of the punishment of the children for the transgressions of the fathers had but temporarily been laid down in the Pentateuch, for the uncivilized people, as a surrogate for the doctrine of immortality; that it was later repealed by Jeremiah (xxx. 29—33) and Ezekiel (xviii.); and that this maxim, although cruel and severe in itself, was yet, in that case, not unjust, since it had been willingly acknowledged by the people as a condition of the covenant. But how can we suppose that a prophet should have attempted to abolish or to amend a moral law of

will not hold him guiltless who taketh His name 'for falsehood.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—In vain.

Moses, or that Moses should have given an ethic doctrine merely as a temporary substitute, since he proclaimed his laws as eternal and unchangeable? (Deut. iv. 2; xiii. 1; etc.). We must, however, add, that, in the judicial *practice* of the Hebrews, the children were often made bond-servants for the debts of their parents, as was the case among the Greeks and Romans. See, especially, 2 Kings iv. 1; compare Isa. l. 1; Nehem. v. 5. But we find no provision of this kind in the Mosaic law, with the spirit of which that hard-hearted custom is in direct opposition.

We must translate *zealous* God, not

jealous; the passion of jealousy can never be attributed to God, before whom all other deities are *nothings*. But those who believe that zealousness is a quality unworthy of the God of Love, we refer to Hengstenberg's remarks (Authenticity of the Pent. ii. p. 454—456), where it is proved, that, without energetic zeal, even His love would be questionable, and that the New Testament shares, in this respect, entirely the notions of the Mosaic records (for instance, Hebr. xii. 29; compare the observations of *Calvin*, Inst. ii. 8, 13).

THIRD COMMANDMENT.—AGAINST PERJURY. HOLINESS OF GOD. VER. 7.

After the existence of God, and His adoration as a Spirit, has been enforced in the two first commandments, follow now appropriately His *holiness* and *sublimity*, which forbid to defile His name by abusing it for an untruth. And, in fact, a false oath, sworn by the name of God, virtually amounts to atheism; and he who violates the third commandment, overthrows at the same time the first. From this point of view, it is accountable why the Rabbins attach such paramount importance to this commandment, that they assert, that the whole world trembled when it was proclaimed. Even our text points to the extraordinary sacredness of this precept, by adding the warning, that "the Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh His name for falsehood." This is evidently expressed with emphasis (by way of *litotes*), and means: "that God will persecute perjury with fearful punishment"; it implies also, as Philo observes, that although men do not see the punishment of the false oath, and although its infliction is often long delayed, God never withholds it. And the chastisement for the heinous crime of perjury, which does not only destroy the divine, but also the human right, which undermines the foundations of society, and indicates a total deadening of conscience and morality, is

justly left to God Himself, who searches the hearts—so dreadful a sin, which springs up in the corrupt soul of the criminal, cannot be persecuted by human judges; and the same practice prevailed a long time among the Romans. In the further progress of the legislation, two kinds of perjury are specified; namely, the false oath of a witness taken before a tribunal; and the untrue declaration in lieu of an oath, by which it is sought to embezzle property found or received (Lev. v. 1; vi. 2, *et seq.*). For either of those two transgressions, expiation by guilt-offerings is required; in the latter case, accompanied by an increased restitution of the embezzled property (see notes on xxii. 6—12; and xxiii. 4). It was, further, considered as a violation of the sacredness of the oath, if an adjuration was publicly proclaimed by the authorities, in cases when the perpetrator of a crime had remained undiscovered, or could not be legally convicted; and if then the guilty, or those who were able to furnish any information on the matter, did not come forward with a full confession (see Lev. v. 1; Prov. xxix. 24; compare 1 Sam. xiv. 24; Mal. ii. 2). An oath uttered rashly or heedlessly, if sincerely repented with self-consciousness, was atoned by a guilt-offering (Lev. v. 4). We find in the He-

8. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10. But

brew text, therefore, two different words for oath, namely, 1, the simple oath, either voluntary or administered; and 2, the adjuration, with added imprecations or curses; and this latter kind is therefore designated by the compound term, oath of adjuration (Num. v. 21; compare Deut. xxix. 11, 13, 18—12). But the "oath" also may be joined with an imprecation (for instance, Josh. ii. 12 *et seq.*), whence it is explicable that both expressions are sometimes used synonymously (Gen. xxiv. 3, 9; comp. with ver. 41). In the Rabbinical right, the precepts concerning the oath have been enlarged to a complete system; but we may here remark, that it distinguishes likewise chiefly the four kinds of oath to which we have alluded; namely: 1. the heedless oath; 2. the unnecessary, superfluous, or vain oath; 3. the oath of witness; and 4. the oath in cases of entrusted or found property.

But as the decalogue contains only the *fundamental* laws, it is more appropriate to understand here the *perjurious* swearing, nor would the menace of so severe a punishment agree with a merely unnecessary oath; and our verse contains, therefore, what is more distinctly expressed in Levit. xix. 12: "you shall not swear by my name falsely."—We subjoin, for the further elucidation of our commandment, the following exposition of Ebn Ezra: "It is the law to this day (the twelfth century) in Egypt, if a man swears by the head of the king, and does not keep his oath, he must die, although he might offer his own weight in gold as a ransom, because he has insulted the king publicly. If this is the case with a mortal king, whose beginning is vain, and whose end is vain, and whose government is vain: how many many thousand times more is man bound to guard his tongue, lest it lead him to guilt and to desecration of the name of God.....And we must observe, that we find, in the decalogue, the reward expressly stated only with

regard to the veneration of our parents, and the punishment only with respect to idolatry and abusing the name of God to falsehood. And many think, that he who takes the name of God in vain, does not commit a very great sin; but I shall show them that it is more serious than all the other prohibitions which follow. For murder and adultery, although they are most obnoxious crimes, cannot be committed at any time, for fear prevents it; but he who has once accustomed himself to use superfluous oaths, swears, in one day, to an infinite amount, and that habit at last becomes so familiar to him, that he scarcely knows that he swears; and if you reproachfully ask him, why he swore just now, he will swear that he has not sworn; so great is the power of the habit; and, at last, almost his every assertion will be preceded by an oath.....And even if there were, in Israel, but that one sin, it would suffice to protract the dispersion, and to add infliction to our inflictions."—A striking instance of the conscientiousness with which oaths were kept, even in the early history of Israel, is recorded in Josh. ix. 15—20.—We need scarcely remark, that all other ancient nations also looked at perjury with horror and abomination, and that the curse of the deity rested on the head of the miserable perjurer. Even so far back as the time of Hesiod (between 700 and 800 B. C.), Eris, or Contention, was called the god of oaths; and Polybius states, that among the ancients the use of judicial oaths was rare; but, as perfidy grew, oaths increased. The Egyptians considered perjury as the blackest crime, which was invariably punished with death, since it implied both a contempt for the gods, and a violation of that faith which is the only tie and guarantee for the welfare of society. The Persians refused to swear, but gave their hand as a pledge of troth. The Scythians told Alexander the Great: "We swear only by keeping our word." "Hercules,"

the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: *in it*

says Plutarch, "was so devout, that he never took an oath." Clinias held adjuration in perfect abhorrence, and the very Greek word, "Epiorkos," signifying perjury, means, literally, the frequent habit of oath-taking. This reluctance to swear at all, even just and judicial oaths, prevailed among the Jews also; the Talmud recommends a simple Yes, Yes, or, No, No, instead of every oath; and the New Testament expresses this idea with peculiar emphasis: "Swear not at all — neither by the heaven, for it is God's throne, nor by the earth, for it is His footstool, but let your communication be Yea, yea, and Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Matt. v. 34—37; James v. 12, with which injunctions Matt. xxvi. 63, 64 does

not stand in contradiction); and in accordance herewith oaths were denounced by Justin, Irenæus, Basil, Chrysostom, and Augustine. How deeply this antipathy to swearing was rooted in the minds of the Orientals is shown by the exactly similar proverb of the Arabs: "Never swear, but let thy words be Yes, or No." And, indeed, oath-taking seems to imply, in its principle and origin, that other simple assertions are less sacred or binding, and thus indirectly to exercise an injurious influence upon the moral and religious notions of the people. But swearing by idols or false gods involves their recognition as governing powers, and is, therefore, tantamount to the crime of idolatry (Jer. v. 5; Amos viii. 14, etc.).

FOURTH COMMANDMENT.—THE SABBATH. VERS. 8—11.

It was not sufficient to establish the *existence*, the *unity*, and the *holiness* of God in the abstract; the concrete formation and strengthening of these notions in life were the more indispensable among the Israelites, as they were first to be trained to religion and virtue by *practice* and *custom*. However willing their minds, carried away by the grandeur of the events, and of the miracles, might have been, to follow the principles of revelation, they were yet not sufficiently prepared or developed to comprehend them, and, therefore, to adhere to them faithfully for any duration of time. It was, therefore, an arrangement of the highest wisdom periodically to set apart a day, hallowed already since the creation, for purely spiritual occupation, and to endow it, for this purpose, with all attributes of a superior sanctity. Thus was the Sabbath intended to become the great educator of the people; it was destined to imprint *practically* in the hearts of the people the theoretical ideas of Mosaism; it was, after the toil-some materialism of the work-days, to animate them with a sound spiritualism; it did not belong to the external, but to the inner man; it was to be en-

tirely consecrated to the Lord. This admirable and sublime institution, if carried out in the spirit in which it was conceived by the lawgiver, secures for ever to the soul the triumph over the physical being, and gains, for the ideal aspirations, the victory over all worldly vanities; it concludes, therefore, most appropriately, the circle of the duties towards God, which cease, thereby, to be a merely speculative system of theology, to be overthrown and superseded by another ingenious display of words and ideas, but become a perpetual and practical guide of internal morality and virtue, strengthened into a second nature by custom and practice. Now, that the Sabbath may, in truth, perform its mission of elevating the soul to God, and of inducing to the study of His precepts, it is to be devoted to absolute physical rest, shared by the whole people with the strangers, and, to complete the picture of tranquillity, even with the animals. Thus the manifold ends were secured, that the double nature of man, the spiritual and physical, always remained in harmonious equilibrium, that the soul of the afflicted forgot, at least temporarily, its cares and torments, and that even the body,

thou shalt not do any work, neither thou, nor thy son, nor

strengthened by rest, was invigorated for the continuance of its labours.

As, therefore, this precept, if scrupulously adhered to, was intended and calculated to ennoble and to beatify man in all his relations, that of the mind, the soul and the body, it is but natural, that both Moses and the prophets and the Rabbins, attach to it a paramount importance. In the Pentateuch (Exod. xxxi. 16, 17) the Sabbath is called an eternal sign or covenant with God, and in this sense the observance of the Sabbath is called "an acknowledgment of the deity," and its violation "a disavowal of the divine omnipotence as manifested in the creation." Nehemiah (ix. 14) mentions the Sabbath alone, of all laws which Moses gave to the Israelites; and the Talmud expressly observes: "the Sabbath is, in importance, equal to the whole law;" "he who desecrates the Sabbath openly is like him who transgresses the whole law," whilst "its strict observance suffices to procure forgiveness even for idolatry;" and Maimonides concludes his dissertation on Sabbath with the words: "he who breaks the Sabbath openly is like the worshipper of the stars, and both are like heathens in every respect." In order, therefore, to invest the Sabbath with the highest possible sanction and holiness, it is instituted as a remembrance of the rest of God, after He had finished, in six days, the work of creation; and this imitation of the divine repose seems especially, as Philo observes, to be considered as the covenant of Israel with God. Thus had Israel received three signs of covenant: circumcision, the Pesach, and the Sabbath, in which that remarkable progress is visible, that circumcision is the individual and personal sign; the Pesach, the national or specifically Hebrew sign; and Sabbath, the universal sign, which includes the whole human race—whence it has alone, as the highest, found a place among the fundamental doctrines of the decalogue. Further, the circumcision is essentially a

ceremonial rite, the Pesach has at least a historical basis, and is connected with the great ideas of independence and political unity, whilst the Sabbath has a perfectly internal and spiritual tendency. Further, the three consecutive signs become relatively more and more intelligible to the human understanding; the circumcision is obscure for us, and hidden in its human origin, and its true end; the character of the Pesach is, at least in some respects, explicable; but the Sabbath "has an existence in the mind itself, and owes its birth to the wants and to the capacities of our moral nature." Lastly, circumcision is a rite performed *once* during the life-time of the Israelite; the Pesach, *annually*; and the Sabbath, *weekly*; whilst the other sacraments, as sacrifices, were practised *daily*. The Sabbath is further distinguished from the two other signs, in this respect, that the foreign slave also, who serves a Hebrew master, enjoys all its privileges of rest and recreation, whilst circumcision is perfectly optional on the part of the servant, and the participation in the Pesach depends on the performance of circumcision (see note on xii. 19).

The decalogue in Deuteronomy (v. 15) assigns another reason for instituting the Sabbath, namely, because God led the Israelites from servitude into liberty, and granted them rest after the labours of a severe bondage. But this does not alter the essence and character of Sabbath. Almost every commandment has a double basis, a *natural* and a *spiritual* one. But the Sabbath received its full significance only by the exode from Egypt, which formed a transition from labour to rest; the Sabbath is, therefore, intended to fill our hearts with that sense of repose and liberty, which must have pervaded the minds of the Israelites in those memorable days. But the fact, that the *creation* is mentioned as the cause of the Sabbath, proves unquestionably, that it is commanded to *all* nations of the earth, not to Israel alone; and it is, at the same time, a convincing argument, that the Saturday,

thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant,

the traditional day among the Jews, is the authentic Sabbath; on which point Luther (Works, iii. p. 643) remarks: "Although the Sabbath has been abolished by the Christians, it is yet necessary to keep one especial day in the week; *nature* also requires both man and beast to abstain from labour, and to rest one day of the week. But he, who wishes to make a *divine* commandment of the Sabbath, as an institution ordained by God, must keep the Saturday, and not the Sunday; for the Saturday has been commanded to the Jews, and not the Sunday." We abide by this decision of the great reformer, and do not deem it expedient here to renew a dispute which has engaged many able pens and has produced many laborious works; those who are accustomed to take large views of religious questions, without preconceptions and without dialectic niceties, cannot for a moment hesitate which course to adopt and which opinion to follow. It suffices to know that the New Testament is most distinct in acknowledging the sanctity of the Sabbath such as it was enjoined by Moses and the prophets, and merely insisting upon its celebration *in its spirit*, without, however, rescinding any of the Sabbatical laws of the divine legislator (Matt. v. 17, 18; xxiii. 23—26; xii. 1—5, 10—12; Luke, xiii. 15; John, v. 9, etc.), whereas the passages in which the abrogation of the Sabbath, or its transfer to the following day has been found, are so obscure that they allow merely inferential proofs without containing direct or conclusive dicta (Col. ii. 16; Acts xv. 28; xx. 6, 7; 1 Coriuth. xvi. 1, 2; Rom. xiv. 5; Gal. iv. 10; the expression "Lords' day," occurs only once in Rev. i. 10; and even its original meaning—*κυριακή ἡμέρα*—is doubtful).

As, therefore, he who desecrated the Sabbath intentionally and publicly, and after due warning had been given him, appears to deny or to disdain God as Creator, he was for such profanation not visited with a merely heavenly

punishment, as was the case with the violation of the two other signs, but with the death of lapidation by the earthly judges (xxx. 14, 15; xxxv. 2; Num. xv. 35, 36); and this severity originated, perhaps, in the idea, that those must be useless, and even dangerous members of society, who, despising the authority of God, do not cultivate with due care, their immortal part, but lose themselves in sordid pursuits of worldly welfare. Those who violated the laws of Sabbath from ignorance or mistake, were obliged to bring a sin-offering. But further, the Sabbath is no isolated institution; it is the foundation of the whole system of the Mosaic festivals; it is the germ of all other sacred days; it includes, as an embryo, the whole cycle of the Sabbath month, the Sabbath year, and the jubilee; therefore he who disregards the Sabbath destroys the days of God as a totality, and deserves thus the more justly the severest chastisement (see notes on xxiii. 10—12).

Our commandment prohibits *every labour* on Sabbath, without specifying the occupations included in that interdiction, but leaving it to the sound judgment of the people to distinguish, which labour would be at variance with the *spirit* of the law, which aims at physical recreation and spiritual elevation, and here also applies the beautiful principle of Ebn Ezra, quoted above (p. 256): "God has given the Law to men of intelligence only, and those who have no intelligence have no Law." The Pentateuch, however, mentions the following kinds of labour as unlawful on Sabbath: 1. The manna should not be gathered; for that was the food for the physical man; and yet not the care for the external wants, but the beneficial influence on the ennoblement of the soul, was the chief purpose of the Sabbath. The meals for the Sabbath were, therefore, to be prepared previously on the sixth day (see note on xvi. 23). About the Sabbath-way, see note on xvi. 29. 2. No fire should be lighted in the houses (xxxv. 3), per-

nor thy beast, nor thy stranger who *is* within thy gates.

haps in order to prevent the preparation of meals (Exod. xvi. 23); but certainly still more to render the labour of the mechanics impossible. This appears with sufficient clearness from the connection in which that prohibition is introduced; but both the one and the other would have been *material* occupations. 3. No wood should be gathered (Num. xv. 33—36); for this also was the consequence of worldly anxiety, which might be delayed to the following day. Buying and selling were, of course, as strictly forbidden as carrying burdens (Nehem. x. 32; xiii. 15—19; Jerem. xvii. 21, 22); agricultural labour was interdicted even in the times of ploughing and of reaping (Exod. xxxiv. 21). As, thus, the legislator has left a wide scope to individual opinion on the nature of Sabbatical labour, tradition, in order to prevent arbitrariness in so important a point, has tried to fill out this void by a detailed definition of the notion of work, and has minutely specified the labours which are allowed, and which are forbidden on Sabbath. The Talmud distinguishes thirty-nine chief labours, comprising all those occupations which were necessary for the construction of the holy tabernacle, and subdivides each of them again into different species. But in cases of illness, and in any, even the remotest, danger, a deviation from the rigorous precepts of the Sabbath is permitted; and in general, were the principles followed: "The Sabbath is delivered into your hand, not you into the hand of the Sabbath" (compare Mark ii. 27, 28; Matth. xii. 8), and, "the least danger of life invalidates the Sabbath."—Further, all the services of the priests and Levites, even those which require much physical labour, were permitted on Sabbath. The circumcision also may be performed on Sabbath: additional proofs, that the spiritual elevation of the Israelites was the only end of the institution of Sabbath. —It was certainly a misconception of this divine behest, if Jewish armies abstained on Sabbath from the use of

arms, and gave themselves up without resistance to be massacred by the enemies; for even according to the severest Rabbinical principles, the use of arms was permitted, since danger to life was threatened. Therefore, later judicious and pious generals (as Mathias and Jonathan) have thus modified that practice, that they exercised on Sabbath the defensive, but refrained from the offensive. There is, indeed, reason to believe, that the Israelites did, before the exile, not scruple to do military service, and to fight on Sabbath in times of danger, since disadvantages, which a contrary practice would necessarily have entailed upon the Israelites in their perpetual wars, are nowhere mentioned throughout the whole of the Old Testament.

As the Hebrews counted the day from evening to evening, Sabbath commenced on Friday at sunset, and closed at the same time on Saturday. Even Friday already had partly a sacred character, and it is in the New Testament called day of preparation (Matth. xxvii. 62, *et seq.*). But as the sun disappears earlier in the valleys than in the mountains, commencement and end of the Sabbath were different according to the geographical position of the places. Josephus mentions, that by a law of the Emperor Augustus, the ninth hour was fixed as the commencement of the Sabbath. In the Jewish towns beginning and conclusion of the Sabbath were, in later times, announced by blowing the tuba.

The Sabbath was celebrated: 1. by offering double the number of daily sacrifices, by which it should become manifest, that the Sabbath is distinguished above all other days, as the "day of days"; that whilst the other days belong to man, the Sabbath is devoted to God (Num. xxviii. 9). 2. In the Holy of the temple the twelve fresh shew-breads and the incense belonging thereto were placed on the table (Lev. xxiv. 5, 8). 3. The division of the priests, destined for the weekly service, commenced their

11. For *in* six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the functions (2 Kings xi. 7, 9). 4. Perfect rest from all physical work was one of the fundamental injunctions: for God rested, although He created the world merely by His *will*, how much more is rest necessary for man, "whose labour is nothing but toil and vexation." The expression, that God rested, is no anthropomorphism; it does not imply the notion of recreation after exhausting labours; it signifies merely the completion of the works of creation; the return of God to His perfect spirituality, to His unchangeable and eternal providence. 5. This day was especially consecrated to devout occupation with holy thoughts. In earlier periods the people visited the prophets to listen to their instructions and exhortations (2 Kings iv. 23). It was a day of holy assembly; the religious service was, especially in later times, most solemn, and in the synagogues the Law was read to the congregation. Even light, thoughtless, everyday conversations were avoided on Sabbath. It was intended to induce the Israelite to reflect on the state of his soul and on the nature of his conduct, and thus to be a day of self-examination, of true repentance, and internal reformation. For the Sabbath is *holy*, and the rest of the Sabbath is a *sanctification*; it shall fill the pious man with a part of the holiness of the Creator; and therefore the Sabbath is significantly connected with the number seven, which represents holiness and divine perfection (see note on xxxiii. 10—12). The more incomprehensible is the opinion of those who place the whole weight of the Sabbath in the mere negative element of refraining from labour, without allowing that that great institution implies another positive element, which constitutes its real and more internal character. Freedom from *all* occupation, both physical and mental and moral is indolence, and thoughtlessness, and apathy, which cannot possibly, and on any account, produce that sanctification, which is the ulterior aim of all human aspirations. The rest of God is our prototype; but God watches and rules, and is a perfect spirit at all times; to approach Him is, therefore the end of the Sabbath; mental and moral indifference would remove us from Him; and the Sabbath, instead of being the greatest blessing of mankind, would be its greatest curse.—But 6. it was also a day of recreation, of joy, and of convivial meetings.

As far as it was in any way feasible, the Israelites celebrated the Sabbath everywhere, and under whatever dominion, except, perhaps, under the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes. "Amidst peril and sorrow, amidst persecution and death, the day of rest was celebrated. In Spain and Portugal, where a public profession of Judaism was punished by exile or death, the Sabbath was still observed. In the secrecy of apartments so dexterously contrived, that they were ignored to the household at large, the Sabbath lamps were lighted, the festive table prepared, wives and mothers, husbands and fathers, gray-haired men and rosy children, assembled in the secluded chamber, and Sabbath hymns were lowly chaunted, and Sabbath prayers were offered up to God, with loud-beating hearts, but whispered voices." And to this observance of the Sabbath especially does the Jewish nation owe the gratifying and auspicious fact, that ignorance never spread among them so far as among many other nations and sects, that every Israelite was, in consequence of the instructions offered to him in the Sabbath discourses, enlightened on the principles of his faith, and that, just in the middle ages, when everywhere the deepest darkness of ignorance and superstition prevailed, immortal philosophers and poets flourished in Israel.

And thy stranger. By the strangers who should also rest, and whom the Israelite is not allowed to employ on that day, we must here understand the second class of those whom we have mentioned in our note on xii. 19, namely, the "strangers of the gate;" the others, the "strangers of justice," are, as a matter of

sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested on the seventh day;

course, included in all the privileges and duties of the Sabbath. But the *beasts* even are ordered to participate in the rest of the seventh day, in accordance with the humane spirit which pervades the Mosaic law in this respect also, and, further, because with the beasts, necessarily men, servants or masters, are obliged to labour (see note on xxiii. 12). It is an ingenious interpretation of the Talmudists, to understand the expression: *God blessed the Sabbath*, so that this day is not included in the divine curse pronounced on the *work-days*, in Gen. iii. 17—19, and that, therefore, by the Sabbath, the paradisiacal blessing is partly restored. Besides, they find in that phrase the intimation, that the rest, on Sabbath, is never injurious to *temporal* prosperity, for God granted, on that account, an increased blessing on the six preceding days, as He gave to the Israelites a double quantity of manna on the sixth day of the week.

We need scarcely go beyond the Pentateuch itself to be convinced that the Sabbath is a purely *Mosaic* institution. In Deut. v. 15, it is brought into connection with the departure from Egypt; in Exod. xvi. 23, it is mentioned with reference to an event which took place only after the exode, and which is, in fact, the first occasion on which it is clearly introduced. We know that it has been asserted that the manner in which the Sabbath is mentioned in the sixteenth chapter, shows that it was, at that time, already familiar to the Israelites. But it is easy to prove that that chapter justifies just the contrary conclusion; for, when the Hebrews gathered, on the sixth day, double the usual quantity, they could not account for it, and enquired, through the elders, of Moses, what that strange incident signified (ver. 22); and Moses answered most explicitly, that the following day is a day of rest, or the Sabbath (vers. 23, 25, 26); but, notwithstanding all this, some of them went out to gather the manna (ver. 27), which would be scarcely explicable on the supposition that the

nature of that day was before familiar to the people. Of still less weight is the argument, that we nowhere find a clear and full law concerning the Sabbath, and that, therefore, the Israelites must have been perfectly acquainted with it; for, we believe, that our commandment states the law of Sabbath with perfect distinctness, and renders its character and tendency quite intelligible. The reason that God rested after the sixth day of creation, is intended merely to point to the sacred and momentous character of the Sabbath, but it does not justify the conclusion that it was instituted already immediately after the creation. The Sabbath may have its primary origin in the creation, and might exist, since then, already in the possibility; but it is clear, that, practically, it could only be introduced after the Israelites had become a nation, independent, autonomous, and free from Egyptian servitude. The commencing words of our commandment: "*Remember the Sabbath-day*," can as little be adduced as a proof of its ante-mosaic origin, since they mean only: be always mindful to celebrate that day; and, therefore, in Deut. v. 12, the words "*keep the Sabbath-day*," are used synonymously with those here employed. Many ancient writers state distinctly, that the Sabbath dates from the time of Moses, for instance, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and Tertullian.

It has been asserted, that the Sabbath of the Hebrews has been imitated from other Oriental nations, as the Egyptians, Chaldeans or Indians, and it has been traced directly to the worship of Chronos-Saturn, from whom, as is well known, the Romans also called the seventh day *dies Saturni*. The Egyptians, likewise, who were acquainted with the weekly cycles of seven days, are said to have commenced the week with the "day of Chronos." As another proof of the adoration of Saturn among the Hebrews, the passage in Amos v. 26, has often been adduced: "You carried the tent of your king, and the image of your idols, the star

wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hal-
of your god, whom you have made to
yourse ves"; and this has, by many, been
falsely understood as *Saturn*. However,
all those analogies are erroneous; for
1st., although the seventh day of the
week was called, by the Romans, *dies*
Saturni, it was considered as an un-
lucky day, which is in perfect antagonism
with the Hebrew Sabbath, and the planet
Saturn itself is called "the nocuous
star;" the Arabians designate Saturn as
the "great misfortune"; the Chaldeans
worshipped him in a black temple, and
in black garments; among the metals,
the lead was devoted to him: 2nd.,
among the Egyptians, the day of Saturn
was the first, not the seventh day of the
week: 3rd., from the passage of Dion
Cassius above referred to, it does not
even appear that the old Egyptians
designated the days after the planets;
but there is certainly no trace of such
appellation among the Hebrews, Syrians,
and most of the Arabic tribes: 4th, Sup-
posing, even, that the prophet Amos indig-
nantly reproached the Israelites, that they
had served the idol Saturn in the desert,
it does by no means follow, that Moses
sanctioned his worship by instituting the
Sabbath as a day consecrated to *Saturn*.
Thus we are perfectly justified in con-
sidering the Sabbath as an originally
Mosaic ordinance; and even if, as is not
impossible, similar institutions are found
among other ancient nations also, the
profound spiritual and religious character
with which the Sabbath is invested, is,
undoubtedly, peculiar to the Hebrew
legislator. "What Moses created out of
the last day of the week, was something
quite new, which had never before existed
among any nation, or in any religion.
The last day was to be devoted to rest:
all the usual labours of man were to be
interrupted, and a universal stillness
should prevail. Then man should resign
every gain and enjoyment after which he
aspires in his ordinary toils and pursuits:
this is the *sacrifice of self-denial* which he
has to offer, a sacrifice widely different
from all the offerings of other times

and nations, but not so very easy for
the human mind, which is gain-seeking,
and absorbed in the turmoil of the
world" (*Ewald*, *Antiq.* p. 107). The
same critic calls the Sabbath "the
greatest and most productive idea of
Mosaism;" and *Baehr* remarks, that we
find, in the whole ancient world, as little
a parallel institution of the Sabbath as of
Mosaism itself.

Heathen nations had, however, a
knowledge of the Hebrew Sabbath, but
the curious character of the accounts
which they give of it is well calculated to
cause our astonishment. Tacitus (*Hist.*
v. 4) writes: "On the seventh day, it is
reported, they resolved to celebrate rest,
because that day brought them rest from
their toils; later they devoted the seventh
year also to laziness, since they had tasted
the sweetness of indolence. Others al-
lege, that this is an honour rendered to
Saturn [see *supra*], either because they
received the elements of their religion
from the Idaeans [Cretans], who, we are
informed, were expelled from that country
with Saturn, and were the founders of
the nation; or else, because, among the
seven planets by which men are governed,
the star of Saturn moves in the highest
orbit, and exercises the greatest influ-
ence, and because most of the heavenly
bodies complete their effects and their
course by the number seven"!! (see
Introduction, § 3. viii). Plutarch, on the
other hand, believes, that the Sabbath
is celebrated in honour of Bacchus,
because this deity is also called *Sab-*
bas, and was, on festive occasions,
invoked with *Saboi*. Justinus (xxxvi. 2)
observes: "On the march to the old
Syrian father-land, Moses encamped at
Mount Sinai. When he, at last, after
a fast of seven days in the desert of
Arabia, arrived there with his people,
completely exhausted, he appointed the
seventh day, called Sabbath, in the lan-
guage of the people, for all eternity as a
fast-day (!), because that day had con-
cluded their hunger and their wan-
derings." In this account the origin and

lowed it.—12. Honour thy father and thy mother, that

the nature of the Sabbath are stated with equal inaccuracy, for fasting, which would have been in opposition to the cheerful character of the day, was expressly forbidden (see *supra*; compare *Introduction*, § iii. 9). And yet is the same error found in Suetonius (*Life of Augustus*, lxxvi); Persius (v. 184), and Petronius (*Fragm.* p. 883, Ed. Burmanni). But the most ludicrous statement is that of Apion, which is too curious to be omitted here; he says (*Josephus contra Apion*, ii. 2): "When the Jews had travelled a six days' journey, they had buboes in their groins: on this account it was that they rested on the seventh day, having arrived safely in that country which is now called Judea; then they preserved the language of the Egyptians, and called that day the Sabbath, for that malady of buboes was named Sabatosis by the Egyptians." Impudence and ignorance vie here for the palm.

We will not leave this subject without citing, as a deeply-felt tribute of respect and veneration, a few remarks from the gifted pen of an individual, who has devoted all energies to the moral and social amelioration of our toiling, careworn fellow-men, who was, alas! too early called away from the sphere of

earthly activity; but who now, this is our consolation, enjoys, in better worlds as a blessed spirit, the glorious rest of an everlasting Sabbath: "We are all conscious of the mind's affinity to the Supreme Being, we are sensible of its unfathomable thoughts, its lofty aspirations, and its bright-winged hopes; but yet the spiritual life which embodies these hopes and thoughts is not the one we habitually lead. Beside and around us is the world, with its labours and its cares, its pomps and its vanities; before us is virtue, is duty, is eternity; the Sabbath is a bridge thrown across life's troubled waters, over which we may pass to reach the opposite shore—a link between earth and heaven. . . . For as the earthly Sabbath calls upon the worldly being to give place to the spiritual one, to lay aside for awhile the cares and labours of earth, to put on the repose and holiness of heaven, so is it but a type of the eternal day, when the freed spirit, if it be true to itself and to God, shall put on for ever its robe of immortal holiness and joy."—(*Mrs. Horatio Montefiore*, *A few Words to the Jews*, pp. 102, 134; a work which breathes throughout the purest and loftiest idealism).

FIFTH COMMANDMENT. VENERATION OF PARENTS. VER. 12.

After the system of the duties towards God has been laid down in the three first commandments, and after its practical execution has been secured by an eternal and solemn institution, in the fourth, the commandment of filial love and obligation towards parents, follows with admirable wisdom, as a transition to the duties towards our fellow-men. For the illustration of this precept nothing seems more adapted than the following passage in *Lev. xix*, 2, 3: "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them, *You shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy. You shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my Sabbaths. I am the Lord your God.*" Here the sanctification of the

Sabbath and the veneration of the parents are placed together—and both are considered as the first criteria and the first conditions of the internal resemblance of man to God. Namely, as we have demonstrated, that without the Sabbath all the other duties towards God would have remained but an empty, aerial, and speculative theory, and that by that institution only they were raised to a reality and a truth; thus the conscientious observance of the filial duties forms the foundation of all our obligations towards our fellow-men. For the family is the basis of society; and the parents are the centre of the family. The disorganization of family-life in a state is the surest and most melancholy symptom of its decay; the disobedient son will be

thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy

a faithless husband, as he will undoubtedly prove an unpatriotic citizen, an untrustworthy friend, and an undutiful man. The very wording of our commandment proves that it has a political back-ground; it promises long life in the land, in which the Israelites were to form a nation; domestic virtues are a guarantee for social and civil excellence; both are branches of the same stem; both flourish and both decay together. And Ebn Ezra was so clearly conscious of this truth, that he explains these words thus: "If Israel keeps this commandment it will not be exiled from the promised land." If, therefore, the promise of long life for filial piety does not always appear to be personally verified, it is certainly always realized in a social sense; the trespasses of the individual redound on the state as a whole; they accelerate its political decline; and as the Mosaic law always addresses the whole people as a unity; as the duties of the individual are invariably conceived in their bearings on the entire community: so we find here both relations internally interwoven; the personal and civil duties concentrate in the same point; the one are the emanations of the others. And thus it is improper pedantically to urge the literal meaning of that promise. But even with respect hereto we must keep in mind, that not every thing is discord which appears so to the superficial observer; that many a premature death may be merited, although we see no obvious guilt; that there exists an internal and necessary connection between our deeds and our fates; that the heart of man can never divest itself from this conviction without destroying its very life-blood; and if all this does not suffice to restore, in our eyes, the harmony between conduct and destiny, we are referred to another existence, in which full compensation will be made, and in which the adjustment will be perfect. "If God takes an obedient son," remarks Calvin, "early from this life, He remains, nevertheless, as truly faithful to His promise, as if a person who has promised to

his neighbour one acre, gives him a hundred. It is of the highest importance to understand, that long life is promised to us as a *symbol or pledge of the divine grace*, but that God may bestow it upon us often in an infinitely higher degree in a future world." Thus our promise is also far from establishing that principle of external or earthly felicity which has often been found in it, to the derogation of this commandment.

If filial love were nothing but a duty of gratitude towards the parents as the greatest benefactors of our infancy and youth, it would necessarily be boundless and eternal, and its violation would deserve the severest punishment; for ingratitude to earthly benefactors is always accompanied with indifference to the divine blessings; and the Jewish sages justly remark: "How should he, who forgets the benefits of his human, visible friends, gratefully remember the gifts of God, whom he does not see with his external senses." And from this point of view, ingratitude was, even among the Persians, punished with death, because it inevitably degenerates into impiety. Thus it cannot surprise us, that in the Mosaic legislation, filial refractoriness, disrespect by deed or language, and even disobedience, of such children, who in spite of the paternal admonitions, would not desist from certain notorious vices, were capitally punished: they are not only superfluous, but dangerous members of society; neither the authority of God, nor the rights of men are sacred from their audacity and degeneracy.

But it is not merely gratitude, which the children owe to their parents; the relation between parents and children is no conventional one; the children have no right to consider it dissolved or relaxed, if they believe that they have not experienced from their parents a sufficient amount of affection and of benefits; even the parents themselves have no power to modify it by dispensing with the respect due to them by their children. The latter are not the equals of the parents; they

God giveth thee.—13. Thou shalt not 'murder.—Thou

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Kill.

are subordinated to them by birth, divine right and reason; *the parents are the visible representatives of God*; the *dii terrestres*; they are the middle link between the children and God as Creator; they are not only their nourishers, but also their first and most efficient instructors; not physically only, but morally also, they give them existence and vigour: the relation between parents and children is, therefore, holy, religious, godly, not of a purely human character; it is a profanation, to weigh and measure filial affection and devotion after the degree of enjoyed benefits; it must be unlimited and eternal like our love to the Creator.

And therefore our text does not speak of mere gratitude towards the parents, but of *honoring*, or in other passages, of *fearing* them (Lev. xix. 3); the former expression alludes to the internal, to the mind's connection between parents and children; the latter to the unconditional subordination of the one under the will of the other; for the same words (honor and fear) are applied with reference to God also (see Ps. cxv. 1). The Rabbinical sages say expressly: "The awe of the parents must be upon thee like the awe of God"; they place, in fact, the duties towards the parents in many respects on the same principles as those towards God. Therefore this commandment contains, like the four preceding ones, the words: "the Lord thy God," and which are obviously intended to remind us, that here divine duties are enjoined; whereas those words do not occur in the five last commandments. God Himself cannot be called by a name more endearing, more affecting and sacred than that of Father (compare p. 248); and both father and mother are used, beyond their literal meaning, for all individuals who guard others with loving care and faithful solicitude (compare Gen. xlv. 8; Judges v. 7). Thus both the embodiment of this precept in the decalogue is justified, and the place which it occupies in this momentous code, in the exact

middle between the godly and the human duties, is logically appropriate.

In order to secure a more conscientious observance of this duty, the reward is added: a long life in the promised land.—We are no admirers of artificial or mystical explanations; but it may be safely admitted, that filial disobedience does not only indicate, in the organization of the individual, a moral and mental anomaly, but also a physical disorder, which renders a long and happy life almost impossible. And further, "experience teaches us frequently," observes Philippson, "that in this sphere especially a visible Nemesis persecutes the fate of man, so that the children generally recompense to their parents that which these have done to their own parents." The reward corresponds exactly with the command; God promises for the dutiful veneration of the parents a prolongation of that life which the latter have given to the children; and these are constantly reminded of their Father in heaven, on whom they are dependent besides their earthly parents.

It is well known, that the heathen nations also considered this duty as a holy debt, which it was incumbent upon every man most scrupulously to pay. With regard to the Greeks and Romans, this requires scarcely any further exposition. About the Chinese, says Du Halde: "Nothing can be compared to the reverence which is shown by the children to their parents; they speak little, and never sit down in their presence. They have the custom, on certain days, as, for instance, on the first day of the year, the birth-day, and on some other occasions, to honour them by kneeling down before them, and touching the ground several times with their foreheads. Even after the death of their parents they preserve their filial devotion, and they render to them the same homage as if they were still living."—"In Persia a son never sits in the presence of his father, or his mother; even the king's son always stands

shalt not commit adultery.—Thou shalt not steal.—Thou

before him, and is regarded only as the first of his servants." *Morier's Travels*, p. 134. The same notions prevailed among the ancient Egyptians. It was considered unbecoming for a child to sit down in the presence of his father, without his permission; still more so to smoke before him. The mummies of the parents were considered as their most valuable and most sacred property, and were regarded as the safest pledges for debts; their memory was cherished and revered for successive generations, and their tombs were maintained with the most scrupulous care. Parricide, perhaps the most unnatural of all crimes, was punished with unusual severity. The criminal was lacerated with sharpened reeds, thrown on thorns, and burnt to death; but if a father murdered his child, the corpse of the deceased was fastened round the neck of the former, in which position he was obliged to remain for three whole days and nights, under the control of a public guard.

The later books of the Old Testament are replete with injunctions regarding this commandment; the Proverbs repeat, incessantly, such exhortations; and the beautiful tale concerning the Rechabites, in Jeremiah xxxv, is universally known; but they are equally severe in threatening punishments to those who violate their filial duties; so, for instance, Prov. xxx. 17: "The eye that mocketh at the father, and disdains to obey the mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." The Tal-

mud, especially, abounds in admonitions, touching narratives, and examples of this kind; it calls our precept the most important of all human duties, places it at the head of those laws for the observance of which we enjoy a double reward, on earth and in heaven, and makes the value of the nine other commandments depend on the manner in which this precept is fulfilled; but it includes the teachers also, as the spiritual parents, in the same veneration. Beautiful precepts are also contained in the book Sirach, especially in the third chapter, where we read: "The Lord has raised the father over the children, and has appointed the judgment of the mother over the sons.....He who honours his father, will rejoice at his children, and be heard on the day when he prays.....The blessing of the fathers supports the houses of the children; but the curse of the mother destroys them to the ground.....Child, take care of thy father in his old age, and do not grieve him as long as he lives. If he decreases in understanding, be indulgent, and do not despise him on account of thy full vigour.....Like a blasphemer is he who forsakes his father, and cursed by the Lord is he who gives pain to his mother." The attentive reader will easily discover, that these words of Sirach merely develop the internal idea of the fifth commandment, and that they unfold that which is here enclosed as in an embryo.—About the punishment fixed for the violation of filial duties, see note on xxi. 15, 17.

SECOND TABLE.

SIXTH COMMANDMENT.—AGAINST MURDER. VER. 13.

The external form of the laws of the second table, differs, in several remarkable points from the form of the first table. As the five first commandments treat of our duties towards God, we find, in each of them, that relation hinted at by the words "the Lord thy God" (see *supra*, p. 275), whereas, in the five last commandments, which refer to our duties towards our fellow-men, the words "thy

neighbour," are four times repeated. Further, the first table contains, at each precept, some explanatory addition; the second pronounces, briefly and emphatically, the mere laws, without a word of elucidation. The reason is obvious. Our relation to God is obscure and hidden, and requires, therefore, some illustration; but our position towards our fellow-men is familiar to us, for, since we can, as

shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.—

men, feel the wrongs which others do to us, we have an unerring guide how we ought to act towards others. About the connection of this commandment with the whole decalogue, see p. 253.—The Septuagint, the English Version, and others, divide the following three commandments into three different verses (13, 14, 15), and, in some manuscripts, the commandment against adultery precedes that against murder, and, in this order, these precepts are enumerated by Philo. But both the version in Deuteronomy, and the Samaritan codex, agree with the arrangement in Exodus, which, as we have shown, is admirable for its logical clearness.—Attempts have been made by the Talmudists, to bring the laws of the first tablet into correspondence and harmony with those of the second, so that every divine precept is parallel with a kindred human duty. Although we do not find the results of these endeavours always unforced and simple, yet, with respect to murder, the Pentateuch itself seems to invite to such comparison; for, in Gen. ix. 6, the prohibition of that crime is introduced, with the addition: “for in the image of God made He man,” so that a murder committed against a human being seems like an assault upon the divine majesty itself, that is, a negation of the first commandment; and the unspeakable horror which the legislator everywhere expresses for murder, and which he evidently strives to implant in the hearts of the Israelites also, seems, indeed, to originate in a similar consideration. If blood covered the soil, the land is considered defiled and polluted; it cried to heaven, and its voice is not silenced before the crime is expiated by the death of the perpetrator. If blood remains unrevenged, it is threatened, that the land which witnesses such abomination would “vomit out” its inhabitants. From such severe principles resulted naturally, a high and sublime notion of the dignity of man, of the sacredness of human life—and this is, again, the source of all social virtues, the germ of all

righteousness; for he who is accustomed to see in every fellow-man, however humble, a sacred being, a representative of God, will faithfully and cheerfully perform all duties which he owes to him; all acts of daily intercourse will assume the character of a religious purity, they will be priestly functions. Thus the first commandment of the second table points to the very centre and kernel of the whole table: and, as the love of our neighbour comes from God, so it leads back to Him; for that continued and uninterrupted service ennobles the mind, leads to humility and submission, prevents a proud presumption and tyrannical treatment of the fellow-man, connects all actions with a higher idea, and kindles, incessantly, the flame of belief; and so the unity of both tables is established.

The question about *suicide* is as little treated, in the Mosaic law, as those of parricide and child-murder; but the Jewish exegesis finds it interdicted in Gen. ix. 5, in the words: “but your blood [that is, your *own* blood, which you shed yourselves] I will demand from your souls [that is, in after life].” Perhaps Moses considered it superfluous to enact a law against a crime which he believed to be so unnatural that it would not easily be committed. In fact, it was but rarely perpetrated among the Israelites; for in the whole Old Testament, only three cases of this kind are mentioned, Saul, Ahithophel, and Zimri; whilst in the later unfortunate period of the Roman war they increased to a most fearful extent. The reason assigned by Michaelis, that Moses would, by a direct prohibition, have made the unconscious crime a conscious and, therefore, more punishable sin, without thereby in any way preventing it, is untenable; as, by that argument, almost the whole criminal legislation could be represented as injurious. However, suicide is indubitably against the spirit of Mosaism, and this has been beautifully developed by Josephus (Bell. Jud. III. viii. 5). After having adduced the general philosophical and rational

14. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house; thou

arguments against that crime, especially that we see in Nature, which we must take as our guide, no animal destroy itself spontaneously, and that—which remark is particularly directed against the stoics—it requires much more fortitude to bear the miseries of misfortune than cowardly to escape them by a momentary pain, he treats this question from a theological point of view in the following manner: “And do you not think, that God is very indignant when a man wantonly wastes that which He has bestowed on him? for from Him it is that we have received our being, and we ought to leave it to His disposal to take that being away from us. The bodies of all men are, indeed, mortal, and are created out of corruptible matter; but the soul is ever immortal, and is a portion of the Deity, which inhabits our bodies; besides, if any one destroys or abuses a deposit which he has received from a mere man, he is esteemed a wicked and perfidious person; but if any one expels from his body this divine deposit, can we imagine that He, who is thereby affronted, does not know it? Moreover, our law justly ordains, that slaves, who run away from their masters, shall be punished, though the masters from whom they escaped may have been cruel to them. And shall we endeavour to run away from God, who is the best of all masters, and not think ourselves highly guilty of impiety? Do you not know, that those who depart out of this life according to the law of nature, and pay that debt, which was received from God, when He that lent it us is pleased to require it back, enjoy eternal fame? that their houses and their posterity are sure, that their souls are pure and obedient, and obtain a most holy place in heaven whence, in the revolution of ages, they are again sent into pure bodies; whilst the souls of those who have acted madly against themselves are received in the darkest place in Hades, and while God, who is their father, punishes those offenders in their posterity? [Comp., however, p. 260 *et seq.*]. From this reason, God

hates such acts, and the crime is punished by our most wise legislator. Accordingly, our laws determine, that the bodies of such as kill themselves should be exposed without burial till sun-set [see, however, *infra*], although it is lawful to bury our enemies sooner. The laws of other nations also enjoin, that such men's hands, with which they waged war against themselves, be cut off when they are dead, believing that, as the body is alien from the soul, so is the hand alien from the body. It behoves us, therefore, to reason justly, and not to add to the human calamities impiety towards our Creator.” The instances of suicide mentioned in the Old Testament (1 Sam. xxxi. 4; 2 Sam. xvii. 23; 1 Kings xvi. 18) prove, of course, nothing for their lawfulness. But it appears, from the history of Ahithophel (2 Sam. xvii. 23, *et seq.*), that self-murderers did not forfeit the right of disposal of their property, and that they even were not excluded from the usual privileges of burial. Compare the philosophical arguments against suicide of Leibnitz, Montesquieu, J. J. Rousseau, and others, in Genoude's Commentary, p. 294.

The notion of murder has been considerably enlarged by Jewish tradition; the Talmud contains, among others, the following dicta: “Who robs his neighbour of the least trifle is like a person who takes away his life.”—“He who makes the face of his fellow-man become pale for shame is like an individual who sheds blood.”—“He who makes his fellow-creature sin commits a greater crime than the murderer.” Ebn Ezra also enumerates several similar cases which morally amount to murder. However, although all these ideas are, *implicite*, included in our commandment, the preceding remarks will have sufficed to show, that we can here think of the actual murder only, that is, the *intentional* killing of a man; for the justifiable and excusable homicide, (Numb. xxxv. 15; Deut. iv. 42, etc.), were not capitally punished. We have treated of the laws about murder fully in our notes on xxi. 12—14, to which we refer.

shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant,

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT. AGAINST ADULTERY. SACREDNESS OF MATRIMONY.
VER. 13.

After the commandment concerning the persons of the neighbours, follows organically the precept concerning individuals who are, in certain respects, identical with the persons of the fellow-men themselves, and yet, in other regards, form a property; thus the commandment against murder is logically succeeded by that against adultery. Or we may view the connection thus: the sixth commandment protects the life; the seventh secures the rights of her who prolongs and continues it through the progeny, and who is "the mother of life" (Gen. iii. 20). The notion of matrimony has, in the Old Testament, from the very commencement, been conceived in admirable purity and perfection. Already the wife of Adam is called "a help at his side," that is, a companion through life, with whom he coalesces to one being (Gen. ii. 18, 24). Matrimony is frequently denominated "a covenant of God" (Prov. ii. 17, etc.; compare Zend Avesta, Jescht Zade xxxi). The prophet Malachi calls the wife a helpmate and friend; and conjugal faithlessness, treachery, which brings down the anger and constant displeasure of God; even divorce is described as hateful in His eyes (ii. 14—16); and in the Proverbs a virtuous wife is called the "crown of her husband" (xii. 4); and a wise helpmate, "the gift of God," whilst houses and wealth are but the inheritance from the fathers (xix. 14; compare v. 15—19; Ps. cxviii. 3).

As, therefore, the relation between the conjugal couple was considered as an absolutely internal and sacred one, it follows, that its violation by either party was regarded a punishable crime, and thus the severity is explicable, with which the Mosaic law denounces such transgressions; for the adulterer was punished with death (Lev. xx. 10; Deut. xxii. 22); unchastity of a betrothed was threatened with the death of both offending parties (Deut. xxii. 23). The same severity is observable in the other books of

the Old Testament. Job exclaims (xxx. 11, 12): "It [adultery] is a heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges. For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction, and uproots all my increase." The Rabbins also denounce with almost implacable severity the nefariousness of adultery: "God looks upon every sin with long-sufferance, except on unchastity;" and they are inexhaustible in precepts and advice, how effectually to ward off the bad propensities, and especially the sinful imaginations.

This rigour will be the less surprising, if we consider, that the existence of the families, and consequently the safety of the whole social structure is most immediately endangered by the violation of this commandment; and it is this *social* importance especially, which is embodied in our law, since the purely *moral* prohibition is contained in the tenth commandment: "Thou shalt not covet the wife of thy neighbour." Thus, in our precept the fatal effects upon society, in the last commandment, the corruption of the heart as the source of the impiousness of adultery is pre-eminently regarded. Erroneous is, therefore, Ebn Ezra's opinion, who believes, that our precept includes every unchaste conduct and desire, and who quotes from Saadiah a sixfold gradation of that sin; Rashi already observes correctly, that it treats only of real adultery with the wedded wife of another; as this crime is morally and politically the most baneful. The decalogue contains merely the general prohibitions; which the later legislation develops and enlarges in the same spirit. (Compare about unchastity, note on xxii. 15, 16).

It requires scarcely any proof to show the honorable position which the women occupied in Hebrew society. From the very creation of the woman, who is a part of man himself, and for whose sake he "shall leave his father and his mother, so that both be one flesh," down to the glo-

nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that *is* thy neighbour's.

rious picture of the virtuous wife in the last chapter of the Proverbs, the whole Bible breathes the highest regard for female excellence, and assigns to the weaker sex that sound and noble rank which forms the just medium between its Oriental degradation and the exaggerated gallantry of the romantic epochs. We need only to mention the wives of the patriarchs, the names of Miriam, Deborah, the wife of Manoah, Hannah, Michal, Abigail, the queen Maachah (1 Kings xv. 13), the Shunamite, and the prophetess Huldah, the pious women who regularly served in the holy tabernacle, the daughters of Shiloh dancing in the vineyards, the women who proclaim the triumph and glory of David over Goliath, and the most tender descriptions of the Song of Songs; and it will readily occur to all minds, what degree of liberty, of respect, of education, and of influence the Hebrew women enjoyed. The history of the creation ("she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man"), appears even to imply the highest and most ideal form of matrimonial life, monogamy, which seems only not to have been expressly enforced from the same regard for deep-rooted national feelings, which Moses wisely respected in many other instances. Several Mosaic laws seem, indeed, to be based on monogamy (Deut. xxv. 5); and as marriage was considered as a religious duty to every one, polygamy was *eo ipso* excluded; for the opinion, that in the East more females are born than males, is not borne out by fact. Other laws are evidently calculated to render polygamy very inconvenient, if not often impossible (compare especially Deut. xxiii. 1; Lev. xv. 18; xxi. 10). Monogamy seems, therefore, even in the times before the exile, to have been the rule, except with rich and noble individuals; it is the basis of many poetical descriptions (Prov. xxxi.; Ps. cxxviii.); later, it became almost general (Tob. i. 11; Sir. xxvi. 1, etc.), till it was at last commanded by a law of Rabbi

Gershon ben Judah, in the year 1020, at the synod of Worms. The case seems, in fact, to have been very analogous to that of the Egyptians. For, on the one hand, observes Herodotus (ii. 92), that every Egyptian married but one wife; whilst on the other hand, Diod. (i. 80), remarks, that the priests took but one wife, the others as many as they liked. Monogamy seems, then, to have been the rule, polygamy the exception. The history of the patriarchs is, in this respect, very instructive. Abraham resigns every hope of posterity, rather than taking another wife besides Sarah (Gen. xv. 2), who urges him to take Hagar. And Jacob intended, originally, to marry Rachel only; the fraud of Laban induced him to take her sister besides; the maid-servants were then brought to him by his wives. The word "concubine" is nowhere mentioned in the Mosaic code; in fact, it does not occur in the four last books of the Pentateuch; and Moses seems to have disapproved of such intercourse with women who occupied an intermediate position between wife and servant (see note on xxi. 7—11). Even the New Testament does not, by a general law, abolish polygamy; it orders only that the bishop should be one wife's husband (1 Tim. iii. 2); just as monogamy seems to have been prescribed to the Hebrew priests (Lev. xxi. 14). The very name of the woman in Hebrew, compared with her designations in Greek and Latin, proves the high position of the female sex among the Israelites: in the holy tongue it signifies a part and a partner of man, perfectly equal to him in dignity (Gen. ii. 23); she bore his name (Isa. iv. 1); whilst the Greek and Roman appellations indicate merely a sexual relation to the man. The bitter invectives of Solomon against women originated in his unnatural and anti-Mosaic excess, which precluded him from studying and admiring the excellencies of the sex in *one* attached and loving

15. And all the people witnessed the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the sound of the trumpet, and the

wife.—The same cultivated principles with regard to the estimation of the woman, have been expressed and enjoined by the Talmud. We quote some Rabbinical adages: "A man who loses his first wife feels grief as if the temple had been destroyed in his days." "The generations are only saved on account of the piety of the virtuous women." "He who lives without a wife lives without joy." "The very altar sheds tears for him who divorces his first wife." "An honourable man honours his wife; a despicable man despises her." We find in the Rabbinical writings no sentences like that of the Arabians: "The shame of the woman is everlasting;" or of the scholastic ages: "Mulier Satane opus;" or of the French: "Celui que Dieu veut aider, sa femme lui est enlevée;" or, "A qui perd sa femme et un denier, c'est grand dommage pour le denier." The Israelites never knew the demoralizing custom of the Greeks to lend away their wives; they neither required from them that divine worship, by prostration and prayer, which the Persians demanded; nor did they ever adopt the barbarous madness of the Indians, who burn the surviving widows. Even the latest Jewish writings have invariably and faithfully preserved that purity in the notions concerning women, which pervades the pages of the inspired authors. But the Hebrew women deserved that respect, and maintained their dignity by the severity of their morals, and by their exemplary activity; even princesses assisted in all domestic duties (compare 2 Sam. xiii. 8; 1 Sam. ii. 19; Prov. xxxi. 10, *et seq.*). In the more flourishing epochs of the history of Israel, the women kept virtuously at

home; the contrary custom was a symptom of the decay of public morals (2 Macc. iii. 19). Respect and veneration for the mother and the father are always enforced with equal emphasis (verse 12; xxi. 15, 17; Lev. xix. 3, *etc.*; where she is even mentioned before the father, *etc.*). The rights of both sexes are, almost in every respect, equal; for Mosaism degrades no person to a *thing*, as was the case with the Roman slaves; nor does it deliver up any individual to the arbitrariness of a superior, as was the fate of the Roman wives and children, who stood entirely under the power of their husbands and parents; as we shall prove in its due place. The punishments for the crimes of unchastity were also nearly identical, in both sexes, which is another weighty argument for the dignity attributed to the other sex. And yet was their personal liberty by far not so restricted as among other Oriental nations (except the Egyptians, where the position of the woman was rather anomalous); they took, *unveiled*, part in the domestic occupations (Gen. xii. 14); they were visible to strangers (Gen. xx. 2); they lived, in Palestine, together with the men, not separated in immoral and voluptuous harems (Exod. xxi. 22; 1 Sam. ix. 11, *etc.*); they appeared even in all public processions and festivities, actively and honourably co-operating with dances and music (Exod. xv. 20; 1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7; Psa. lxxviii. 26); their praise was the sweetest reward, the strongest encouragement of the hero; and often they were themselves the envied price of distinguished valour (Josh. xv. 15, *et seq.*; 1 Sam. xviii. 20).

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT. AGAINST THEFT. VERSE 13.

A state in which the property of the citizens is unsafe and, by impunity of the offenders, exposed to incessant attacks, cannot prosper or flourish; the sound development of its national resources is checked and crippled; the so-

cial order, in general, is deranged; and the very existence of the commonwealth becomes precarious and liable to chaotic anarchy. As violation of the right of property is, therefore, a social crime, it was, necessarily, interdicted in the deca-

mountain smoking: and when the people saw *it*, they shrunk back and stood afar off. 16. And they said to

logue, which contains the fundamental laws of the political structure. But an encroachment upon foreign property is, at the same time, a crime against a fellow-man personally; for every property is, or represents, the fruit and produce of human industry, integrity, or intelligence, strengthened and guided by the divine blessing; it is, therefore, sacred; and its violation is an act of arbitrary tyranny—of unscrupulous aggression against the right of the neighbour; and, therefore, the commandment against theft stands on the second table; and succeeds, logically, the prohibitions against the destruction of life, and the defilement of matrimony. But it follows hence,

with equal certainty, that our commandment treats of the real and actual theft, of the undeniable attack against the property of others. Although, therefore, the observation of Rabbinical interpreters, that he who deceives his neighbour in measure or weight, or in business in general, is included in this command; as also he who, like Absalom, steals the hearts or good affections of others, is perfectly in harmony with the spirit of our interdiction: yet all these shades and subdivisions are not directly implied in it. See our further remarks, especially about the efficient and just punishment of theft in the notes on xxi. 37 to xxii. 3.

NINTH COMMANDMENT. AGAINST FALSE WITNESS. VERSE 13.

If the three preceding commandments are directed against wrongs inflicted upon our neighbour by the *deed*, the ninth forbids encroachments upon his interests by the *word*, either in private life by falsehood, calumny, insult, defamation and envious detraction, or before public tribunals by false witness. Even common slander and false reports are repeatedly forbidden: "You shall not deal falsely nor lie one to another" (Lev. xix. 11); "thou shalt not raise a false report" (Exod. xxiii. 1); and the infamy, which falls upon the head of the calumniator, is perfectly just, since calumny renders the private intercourse between man and man almost impossible, creates enmities, sows discord, provokes hatred among friends, and may, in fact, embitter life in all its various relations. But every lie is, irrespective of its baneful consequences, a base crime, an offence against the nobleness of our soul, because it is treason against truth. But still more fearful in its destructive effects is the false witness; it undermines, almost literally, the pillars of social order, by falsifying the ways of justice; it may remove the useful and virtuous citizen from the community, and protect and raise the criminal, to the

great detriment of the state; it may often necessarily include or occasion a false oath; the calumniator may also become a perjurer; the third and the ninth commandments may be violated at the same time; and thus the false witness is as degraded in a moral point of view as he is perilous in a political respect; thus we can understand why this command was embodied in the decalogue; and thus we may appreciate the horror with which Jonathan, in his paraphrase, exclaims, at the end of this commandment: "by a false witness the clouds withhold their rain, the dew falls no more, and a famine spreads over the world;" and the Proverbs are replete with protestations and admonitions against that crime: "A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is a hammer, and a sword, and a sharp arrow." The Mosaic code also contains a deterring and energetic law against that depravity: "If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which is wrong..., then shall you do to him as he had thought to have done to his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you" (Deut. xix. 16—20). Thus are crime and punishment weighed in this law with a

Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will readily hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die. 17. And Moses

just balance. In order to prevent, as much as possible, the pernicious consequences of that crime, it was ordained, that in no law-suit one witness should suffice; two or three were required to confirm an assertion, which was then conscientiously and scrupulously examined by the judge (*ibid.* vers. 15, 18).—

As this commandment is obviously of the highest practical and moral importance, the Jewish tradition has most carefully worked it out in all directions, especially with regard to witnesses, their depositions, and their punishment. Compare note on xxiii. 1.

TENTH COMMANDMENT.—AGAINST COVETOUS DESIRES.—VER. 14.

However excellent and indispensable the four preceding commandments are, they would alone be more properly adapted to a police and criminal code, which contains such laws only which are amenable to judicial punishment, and treats only of such offences as assume a visible shape. But the decalogue passes beyond this merely external point of view; its aim is not only to educate citizens of an earthly state, but members of the empire of heaven; not only to form loyal and useful, but virtuous and good men; it was, therefore, necessary to bring before its tribunal not only *deeds*, but also *intentions*. And this is the purport of the tenth commandment. Hereby only the decalogue receives its completion and perfection; by thus stopping the *source* of vice and training honest men, it removes vice itself, and, whilst only intent upon correcting the morals of the citizens, secures the external existence of the state. For, from the *will* spring the actions, and the wicked deed is preceded by the wicked thought; nobody acts wickedly who has not before felt wickedly. And, on the other hand, not every body is virtuous *before God* who is so *before men*; not every body is innocent who cannot be accused by an earthly judge; not every heart is pure that does not proceed to an impure deed; the mind may be filled with sinful imaginations, even if the hand is free from crime. But before God, who penetrates into the heart and searches the reins, purity of the soul is the principal requirement; and by enjoining that internal purity with particular emphasis,

the decalogue is raised from the number of human legislations to the rank of a divine code, at the same time furnishing the clear indisputable proof, that *Mosaism* also is a deeply internal religion and theology, which is not contented with *good works* alone, but as strongly urges upon us purity and nobleness of thought; which idea is, in fact, most frequently repeated in the Old Testament (for instance, Psa. xv. 2; li. 12; etc., etc.). It has been asked, how the heart can be forbidden to covet anything, as the desire for some object involuntarily rises in the bosom, beyond the control or power of man. But not the mere *thought* which desires something is interdicted by "thou shalt not covet," but that stage of the wish in which it is enhanced to a desire for the *possession* of the object, which man may prevent by self-control and careful attention to the impulses of his heart. And thus the prohibition of unlawful desires concludes the decalogue, because it is the origin and sum of all the others; because it leads to the highest of all virtues, self-denial; and because it destroys, as it were, the root of sin; "it comprises the utmost spirituality of the Law;" and, as Ebn Ezra remarks, "the precepts of the heart are the most essential and most important of all."—The principal objects which men usually covet are here individually enumerated, in order to point out with greater emphasis the unlawfulness of covetous desires, whether they be directed upon great and important possessions, or upon less dear and valuable objects.—That,

said to the people, Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before your faces, that you may not sin. 18. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God *was*.

according to some interpreters, this verse is divided into two commandments, we have observed in page 254; but we have tried to prove, that this separation of the parts, which necessarily belong together, is perfectly objectionable. The Samaritan codex has here considerable alterations, consisting especially in additions taken from the parallel narrative in Deuteronomy.

15, 16. After having finished the decalogue, the inspired writer continues the historical account. First, he describes the overwhelming impression which the divine appearance, "under thunder and flames, and the sound of trumpets, and the smoking mountain" produced upon the astounded people. Now only had they become perfectly conscious of the omnipotence of God; now only they felt their own littleness and sinfulness compared with God's grandeur and holiness; they tremble, recede, ask never to behold God's awfulness any more, and desire that Moses should henceforth be their mediator between themselves and God. Thus the divine revelation had worked that additional effect, that the authority of Moses was now unshaken, and that the people, at last, firmly believed in him (see xix. 9).

17. As the people, according to the common belief of antiquity (see on iii. 6), deemed the appearance of God fatal to the life of man, Moses calms and assures them by pointing out two motives by which God was actuated in His personal proclamation of the decalogue: 1st, *To try the Israelites*, that is, in order to give, by this solemn promulgation, additional strength to their belief, to banish every doubt from their minds, and thus to cause a more conscientious observance of the commandments, so that the punishment for their violation becomes now necessarily more

severe; and this is a new *trial*; and, 2nd, that they might bear His fear the deeper in their hearts, and thus be the more effectually protected against sin and unlawful desires. So, then, this divine manifestation was not intended as a terror, but as a new act of love, calculated to promote the true virtue of the people. The Israelites have, with trembling, witnessed the majesty of God; they cannot bear it; fear overpowers them; but this fear was intended by the Almighty; it was designed as a preventive against disobedience, and its next result was the sincere and earnest promise to obey all commands of God, which might be conveyed to them through Moses—to *fear* God, is, here, identical with *to love* Him. This is the connection of these verses (compare note on xix. 3—6). The Samaritan codex has here, again, considerable additions, taken from Deuteronomy; it mentions, especially, the return of the Israelites to their tents (v. 27), which is, certainly, very probable, but needs not, necessarily, to be related in our text, as all accessory circumstances and events are not always minutely introduced in the holy books (see note on xvi. 22).

18. *And the people stood afar off.* The text returns to ver. 15, in which the immediate effect is described which the revelation had produced on the people; and the assurance and firmness of Moses is placed in conscious opposition to their trembling and fear. Moses seems, indeed, to have now conquered his diffidence and hesitation so completely, that he, not much later, ventured even the bold wish, that he might be allowed to see the whole glory of God (xxxiii. 18). *Where God was*; Onkelos renders: "where the glory of God was."

THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT.

CHAPTERS XX. 19 to XXIII. 33.

SUMMARY.—After an introductory remark on the appearance of God (xx. 19), follows:

1. A repeated prohibition against making idols (xx. 20).
2. The command that the altars shall be of earth, wood, or *unhewn* stones, and without steps; with which precept God joins the promise that He would bless with His presence His pious servants in every place where they might mention His name (xx. 21—23).—Then follows:
 - I. *The right of PERSONS*, of free men and of slaves, in all its relations, by intentional or accidental injury (xxi. 1—32); namely:
 3. The laws about slaves (xxi. 1—11); viz.:
 - a) about those who simply sell themselves to a master for the purpose of serving him, whether they be married or not (xxi. 1—6); and
 - b) about such girls whom the fathers sell with the view, and in the hope, that the masters would either themselves take them to wives, or marry them to their sons (xxi. 7—11).
 4. The laws about murder (xxi. 12—14); viz.:
 - a) about premeditated murder (xxi. 12, 14); and
 - b) about unintentional homicide (xxi. 13).
 5. Violation of the reverence due to parents (xxi. 15, 17).
 6. About *plagium*, or man-stealing (xxi. 16).
 7. General personal injury done to a free man (xxi. 18, 19).
 8. To a slave (xxi. 20, 21).
 9. To a part of the person of a free man (xxi. 22—25).
 10. Of a slave (xxi. 26, 27).
 11. Injury caused by a beast (xxi. 28—32); viz.:
 - a) if the injured person is a free man (xxi. 28—31).
 - b) if he is a slave (xxi. 32).
 - II. *The right of PROPERTY* (xxi. 33—xxii. 14); namely:
 12. If it is endangered by *neglect* of others (xxi. 33, 34).
 13. If one person's animal is injured by that of another (xxi. 35, 36).
 14. Laws about theft (xxi. 37—xxii. 3).
 15. About depasturing foreign fields or vineyards (xxii. 4).
 16. About damages caused by fire on fields (xxii. 5).
 17. About property committed for safe-keeping (xxii. 6—12).
 18. About property borrowed from another (xxii. 13, 14).
 - III. *General MORAL LAWS*, which, however, are deeply connected with the civil organization of the state (xxii. 15—xxiii. 19).
 19. About unchastity (xxii. 15, 16).
 20. Law against witchcraft (xxii. 17).
 21. Against coition with beasts (xxii. 18).
 22. Repetition of the law against polytheism (xxii. 19).
 23. Laws concerning the poor, the strangers, widows, and orphans (xxii. 20—23, and xxiii. 9).
 24. About loans and interests (xxii. 24).
 25. About the right of pledges (xxii. 25, 26).
 26. Against disrespect towards God and the authorities (xxii. 27).
 27. About the offering of the first-fruits (xxii. 28, 29; xxiii. 19, first part).
 28. About unlawful meat (xxii. 30).
 29. About judicial justice (xxiii. 1—3, and 6—8).
 30. About found property (xxiii. 4).
 31. Humanity towards animals (xxiii. 5).
 32. About the Sabbath and the Sabbath year (xxiii. 10—12).
 33. Prohibition against mentioning the name of idols (xxiii. 13).

34. The three principal festivals (xxiii. 14—18).
 a) The Passover (xxiii. 15).
 b) The Feast of Weeks (xxiii. 16).
 c) The Feast of Tabernacles (xxiii. 16).
 35. Supplementary law about the Paschal sacrifice (xxiii. 18).
 36. The law about the "kid and the milk of its mother" (xxiii. 19, second part).

After the conclusion of these laws follows the exhortation of God, to adhere to them strictly and faithfully, especially to avoid idolatry, and even to destroy the idols wherever they would find them; and, further, the injunction, not to enter into any association with heathen nations; then would God send His messenger before the Israelites; terror will seize the enemies; the promised land will, in due time, come into their possession; they will enjoy health, longevity, and fruitfulness, and extend their country to the Mediterranean Sea in the west, and to the Euphrates in the east (ver. 20—33, see note *ibid.*).

PREFATORY REMARKS.—After the basis of every further legislation had been laid down in the decalogue, and strengthened by some supplementary laws, the holy text proceeds systematically to the other *rights* (see on xxi. 1), which, either applicable to the nomadic wanderings through the desert, or, especially, to the organized state of the Hebrews in the promised land, comprise social and individual, religious and political, criminal and civil, divine and human statutes. It is a beautiful scriptural metaphor which describes the union between God and Israel under the sacred image of a matrimonial alliance; God has chosen Israel as His eternal helpmate and friend; Israel has accepted the charge to assist God in spreading on the earth the empire of heaven, and the truth of His law; and the time between the exodus and the conclusion of the covenant on Mount Sinai, may be characterized as the period of the betrothal of God and Israel, their joyful love and faithfulness (compare ii. 2; Eze. xvi. 8; xx. 5; Hos. ix. 10; xi. 1; xiii. 5; Am. ii. 10, etc.; see note on xix. 6). The time has now arrived to strengthen this holy union by stipulations and laws, and to secure its original character by a mutual agreement. But, in order not to oppress the people, at the commencement, with a superabundance of laws and precepts, the wise legislator has, in the following four chapters (xxi—xxiv), premised a summary and compendious survey, and then, slowly and gradually, erected the edifice of the legislation on a steadily widening basis. In this small compass the nucleus of the civil order is included, and such brief outline alone, was, by its systematical limitation, fit to be submitted to the people for adoption and sanction. The "Book of the Covenant," therefore, which Moses read to the people, with solemn sacrifices, and the contents of which they unanimously promised to fulfil in its whole extent (xxiv. 4, 7), comprises only these sections of the Pentateuch, namely, the decalogue, and the laws contained in the following four chapters. They are the LAW in a small epitome; and the following sections of the Pentateuch develop the brief sketch here drawn in its parts and details. The systematic and logical arrangement of these laws will constantly be pointed out in the following notes.

19. And the Lord said to Moses, thus thou shalt say to the children of Israel, You have seen that I have

1. AGAINST IDOLATRY. VERS. 19, 20.

In the decalogue, only the fundamental laws were proclaimed; the specification was reserved to the future care of the legislator. But, in order still more to fortify the basis on which the decalogue

rests, the second commandment, which naturally involves the first, is here once more impressively enjoined, namely, to have, or to worship, no other gods besides the God of Israel, nor to represent

spoken to you from heaven. 20. You shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall you make to you gods of gold.

21. An altar of earth thou shalt make to me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, and thy thank-offerings, thy sheep, and thy oxen: in all places where I shall let my name be mentioned, I will come to thee, and I will bless thee. 22. And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Record my name.

them in any way by gold or silver images, for the pure, spiritual monotheism, formed the corner-stone of the whole religious structure of Mosaism. It is not improbable, that the prohibition in the decalogue refers especially to painting and sculpture, whilst our precept is directed against the molten or cast images. This exclusive

majesty of God is appropriately founded upon the fact, that the Israelites had here witnessed His glory with their own senses, and, although they had heard a voice, they had not perceived a figure. In such invisible grandeur only can the true God of heaven appear; but all the mute idols are vanity.

2. ABOUT THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ALTARS. VER. 21—23.

In order to remove every occasion and every temptation to relapse into the worship of images, a law was at the very beginning given, which can, in this connection, find its rational explanation only with reference to that idea. The Hebrews were, like all ancient nations, accustomed to sacrifices from the patriarchal times; we find sacrifices of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; sacrifices were the pretext used by Moses to induce Pharaoh to permit the departure of the Hebrews; and Jethro had but just at his arrival offered sacrifices (xviii. 12). Now, the altars, which were erected for this purpose, were in the heathen rites generally very pompous, elaborated with all embellishments which sculptural art could command: "They were adorned with sculpture, and some were covered with the works of the most celebrated artists of antiquity." As therefore such ostentatious altars might easily lead to a development of the plastic arts, likely to tempt to the manufacture of idols, it is here commanded to use *altars of earth*; and if later in the holy land and in settled abodes, altars of stone should be preferred, these stones shall

not be hewn, and in general no iron should be applied upon them, but they should be piled up in their natural state without the application of the plastic arts, although these were not altogether excluded from the sanctuaries (see note on ver. 4—6).—This peculiar prohibition might further have its reason in the circumstance, that the unhewn stone, such as it comes from the hands of nature, is most pure, undefiled by human touch and work, and therefore the most appropriate for the sanctity of the altar; and, in fact, the raw stone is the most akin to earth, which was to be the ordinary material for the altar. The application of iron is in our text called a pollution of the altar, because the violent preparation of the material with such instruments appears like an irreverential disregard of the holiness of the intended altar; perhaps also, as Ebn Ezra believes, because the refuse matter of the hewn altar might be used for unworthy purposes. — The Rabbins explain ingeniously: iron abridges life, the altar prolongs it; iron causes destruction and misery, the altar produces reconciliation between God

lift up thy *iron* tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.
 23. Neither shalt thou go up by steps to my altar, that thy nakedness be not uncovered thereon.

and man; and therefore the use of iron cannot be allowed in making an altar. — An “altar of earth” is one which is formed from green turfs, and is, as such, most adapted and most convenient for a wandering nation. Among the Romans also we find such altars frequently alluded to, and they were, even in later periods, used on festive occasions, and, according to Tertullian, this kind of altar was that in general use. — From the preceding deduction it is clear, that the opinion of Clericus concerning the “altars of earth” is not probable: “As God wished that all the Israelites should assemble at one place to offer their sacrifices, He did not permit, that on any other place altars of a more durable material or of a more elegant workmanship should be erected, fearful lest they allure the mass, who are always attracted by external splendour.” — *To mention the name of God* is identical with worshipping Him; for the latter is almost inseparable from the former. See 1 Chron. xvi. 4. — Only if these precepts concerning the nature and construction of the altars are executed, God promises to be near His faithful servants with His aid and His blessing, a sufficient proof what importance is attached to the natural simplicity and purity of divine service.

23. As the external nature of the altar is here described, the Lawgiver adds another precept with regard to the same subject, in order to secure its holiness from another side also. As those, who performed the sacerdotal functions, before the introduction of the proper clerical robes (xxviii. 42), wore the usual loose Oriental garments (see on xii. 11) without trowsers, it was ordered, from considerations of decency,

that no steps should lead to the altar. And even the breeches of the priests, which as we shall later show did not, like our trowsers, cover the feet entirely, made this command not superfluous. But it has been believed, that the height of the altar, which was generally three cubits (xxvii. 1), made a certain arrangement necessary to facilitate its ascent. The Biblical text makes no allusion to such device; and the tenor of our verse leads us rather to believe, that the officiating priest stood on the ground whilst performing the ceremonies. Everything depends on the length of the cubit, which we shall examine in the remarks on the twenty-fifth chapter. Different was the case with the altar of the Solomonic temple, which was ten cubits high (2 Chron. iv. 9). However, it appears from Talmudical explanations, that the real altar was indeed but three cubits high (compare also Ezek. xli. 22); but it rested on a base of six cubits, and its horns rose one cubit high. Now, in order to reach the altar itself, not steps were used, in accordance with the precepts of our verse, but a kind of sloping bridge. — Among the Romans also was a similar law, that the *flamen dialis* should not ascend more than three steps of the altar, unless they were Greek ones, which were enclosed from all sides. — The Rabbins take this opportunity to deduce the following beautiful principle: “those stones, which have no consciousness to feel the contempt shown them, are by a command of God not to be insulted, since they are of some use; how much more must we take care not to offend any one of our fellow-creatures, who is sensible of a degrading treatment, and who bears the image of our Creator.”

CHAPTER XXI.

NOW these *are* the judgments which thou shalt lay before them. 2. ¹When thou ²acquirest a Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve; and in the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—If.

² Buy.

I. THE RIGHT OF PERSONS.

3. LAWS ABOUT SLAVES. XXI. 1—11.

The very first of the civil laws, that about slavery, exhibits that spirit of moderation and humanity, which is the chief characteristic of the whole legislation; and its very position is significant. In the first commandment the Israelites had been conspicuously reminded of their redemption from slavery; and therefore the first civil law was devoted to the regulation of the condition of the slaves. God had raised the whole nation to free citizens; and, therefore, its every member was destined virtually to enjoy liberty; God was the theocratical Lord of the contemplated Hebrew state, therefore the Israelites should serve *Him* only, but no earthly master. Permanent servitude would have been a revolt against the divine sovereignty: “they are *my* servants, says the Lord, whom I have released from the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold in the manner of eternal slaves” (Lev. xxv. 42).—Thus was *personal liberty* the supreme principle of civil right; and this one idea suffices to comprehend and to appreciate the noble tendency of Mosaism and to distinguish this legislation from all other political systems of antiquity.

In a state, which was entirely based on agriculture and husbandry, slaves were an indispensable requisite, and both strangers and Israelites were employed in such services.

a. *Strangers* might come into the hand of Hebrew masters: 1. by war, since the captives of war, both males and females, who were not killed, were made slaves; 2. in peace by purchase; and 3. the children of such slaves were the property of the master, if they were born in his house.—Although such foreign slaves were the

hereditary property of the master, which passed over to his descendants (Lev. xxv. 46), they were yet in the Mosaic code protected by various important privileges; namely, 1. if they had escaped from their masters, they could not be delivered up to them by the inhabitants of the place where they happened to seek refuge: “he shall dwell with thee, *even* among you, in that place, which he might choose in one of thy gates, where he liketh it best: thou shalt not oppress him” (Deut. xxiii. 16). Quite different was the case among the Romans: “A runaway slave (*fugitivus*) could not lawfully be received or harboured, to conceal him was *furtum*. The master was entitled to pursue him wherever he pleased; and it was the duty of all authorities to give him aid in recovering the slave.” The master was severely punished—according to the Rabbins with death—if he so chastised his slave, that he died on the spot (ver. 20); he forfeited even the slave, if he deprived him of one of the principal members of the body, as an eye or tooth (vers. 26, 27). Thus the slaves were effectually protected against arbitrariness on the part of their masters; which advantage they were far from enjoying among other ancient nations, especially the Romans. “The offences of slaves were punished with severity and frequently with the utmost barbarity. One of the mildest punishments was the removal from the familia urbana to the rustica, where they were obliged to work in fetters. They were frequently beaten with sticks, or scourged with the whip, but these were such everyday punishments, that many slaves ceased almost to care for them.—Slaves were also punished by being hung up by

seventh he shall go out free for nothing. 3. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he was mar-

their hands with weights suspended to their feet."—A little more protected were the slaves in the Athenian law; for a person who struck or maltreated a slave was liable to an action, nor could a slave be put to death without legal sentence. However, he was not believed upon his oath, and his evidence in courts of justice was always taken with torture. 3. The Hebrew slave participated in the usual rest of the Sabbath (Exod. xx. 10; Deut. v. 14, where it is expressly added: "that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou"). 4. He was admitted to the enjoyments of Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Deut. xii. 18; xvi. 11, 14). 5. He could be circumcised after the manner of the Hebrews, and was then permitted to share the paschal-lamb with the family in which he lived (Gen. xvii. 12, 13; Exod. xii. 44). Besides, Michaelis conjectures, no doubt justly, that from the humane law in Deut. xxv. 4: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn," it follows, *a fortiori*, that the servants and hirelings of every kind, who were employed at the harvest or the gathering of fruits, were allowed to eat thereof according to their pleasure; it would, indeed, be a Tantalus-like torture, to let the labourer starve in the midst of surrounding superfluity. The hardened sinner and miser is thus described by Job: "Hungry labourers carry his sheaves, within the walls of his workhouses they make oil, they tread the wine-press and suffer thirst" (Job xxiv. 10, 11).—So was then even the foreign slave treated with humane consideration in the Mosaic law.

b) But Hebrews also might fall into slavery, by the following contingencies: 1. If they sold themselves in consequence of poverty (Levit. xxv. 39; Deut. xv. 12). As the legal price of a slave, thirty silver shekels are mentioned (xxi. 32), whilst a free Israelite was valued at fifty

shekels (Lev. xxvii. 3, *et seq.*). The lowest price of a Jewish slave was one hundred and twenty drachmas. 2. If a father sold his daughter to an Israelitish master (vers. 7—11). 3. If a convicted thief was unable to pay the legal compensation for his theft (xxii. 2, 3), in which case, however, he could only be sold to an Israelite, and for a period not exceeding six years. If the jubilee took place within this time, he was then already released. 4. The children of a man-servant and a maid-servant, whom the former had married in the house of the master (verse 4). Sometimes debtors or their children may have been addicted, *de facto*, as slaves to the creditors (2 Kings iv. 1); but this was evidently against the intention of the Mosaic law, which contains no provision on this point (see note to xx. 4—6, p. 262).

Now the treatment and the rights of these Hebrew servants were not regulated after mere feelings of philanthropy; but they received, in conformity with the theocratical principle already referred to, a firmer and more permanent *political* basis. The Hebrew servant was not considered as a *thing*, not as a property for ever lost to the interests of the community. There exists in Hebrew no word for *slave* in the sense of an individual who is considered merely as an instrument; the Hebrew word means merely *labourer*; and the most privileged favourites of God are called "servants of God," so Moses and the prophets, and the people of Israel itself (Isaiah xlv. 2; Jer. xxx. 10, etc.). Even whilst a servant he did not lose his rights as a citizen of the state, and his civil privileges were only suspended, not cancelled. For the law ordains: "When thou acquirest a Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve; and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing" (ver. 2); or in Deut. xv. 12: "And if thy brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, be sold to thee, and serve thee six years, then in the seventh year thou shalt let

ried, then his wife shall go out with him. 4. If his master giveth him a wife, and she beareth him sons or

him go free from thee;" to which is added, in Lev. xxv. 41: "And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return to his own family, and to the possession of his fathers shall he return." As, therefore, the servitude of a Hebrew was, in every case, only *temporary*, he must be considered rather as a *hireling*, than as a *slave*; and thus the holy text, indeed, calls him: "And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee becomes poor, and sells himself to thee, thou shalt not compel him to serve as a *bond-servant*: but as a *hired servant* and as a sojourner he shall be with thee" (Lev. xxv. 39, 40); and it needs, after these remarks, scarcely be mentioned, that he was allowed to acquire property for himself, independent of the control of his master, and that he could redeem himself with it, even before the lapse of the six years (Lev. xxv. 40). Not so among the Romans, who considered it as a rule of the *jus gentium*, that a slave could have no property, for all his acquisitions belonged to his master (Gaius, i. 52). From all this follows, as a natural consequence, the obligation to treat the Hebrew servant with the leniency and consideration due to a fellow-citizen, who is sure to be re-instated into all his civil rights: "Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour, but shalt fear thy God" (Lev. xxv. 43). The legislator has even provided for the case, that a rich non-Israelitish stranger or sojourner buys a poor Hebrew as his slave; in such emergencies the duty devolves upon the relatives of the latter to redeem him even with the greatest personal sacrifices: "let him not be ruled over with rigour in thy sight." But, if he has no relatives capable of redeeming him, he shall at least in the year of jubilee go out free with his children: "For to me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God" (Lev. xxv.

47—55). The duty to release a slave who serves in the house of a *Hebrew* master is not enjoined, because the former was, in this case, sure of humane treatment, which could not be expected from a heathen master.

From these deductions, two disputed points in connection with the legislation concerning slaves, find their easy solution: 1st, whether, by the expression *Hebrew servant* (ver. 2), an *Israelitish* servant, is to be understood, or, generally, one of the descendants of Eber, or of one of the trans-Euphratic tribes, that is, Ishmaelites, Ammonites, Moabites, Midianites, etc. But, undoubtedly, *Israelitish* servants are meant; for *a.* the Israelites only have been delivered from Egyptian captivity (Levit. xxv. 53; Deut. xv. 15); *b.* they only could be called the servants of God (*ibid.*) in a time when all other nations were sunk in the abominations of idolatry; *c.* Jeremiah (xxxiv. 9), alluding to the release of the slaves, explains, distinctly, the phrase "*Hebrew servant*" by "*Jewish servant*," as also, according to Rashi, the words "thy brother," in Levit. xv. 39, 46, and Deut. xv. 12, refers to Israelites; compare Jonah i. 9; *d.* according to Levit. xxv. 44, the Israelites are permitted to take slaves for life from the nations around them; but these are mostly descendants of Eber or Abraham, as the Ishmaelites, Midianites, Edomites, etc. Therefore these nations cannot, in our passage, be included in the name of *Hebrews* (compare Ebn Ezra, on ver. 2). The weak arguments in favour of the contrary opinion, have been dropped by Michaëlis himself, who had formerly adhered to it (*loc. cit.* p. 274). 2nd, In our passage, and in Deut. xv. 12, the time of service is fixed at six years, whilst in Levit. xxv. 40, it is extended to the year of jubilee. This is easily to be reconciled, by the explanation, that the Hebrew servant becomes, in all cases, free, in the year of jubilee, even if this should happen to take

daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. 5. But if the servant

place *before* the lapse of the six years of service. For the seventh year, of which Moses speaks as the year of the regular release of Hebrew slaves, is not the Sabbath-year, but, according to Maimonides, the seventh after the commencement of their servitude; so that the Sabbath-year had no influence upon the condition and relations of the slaves. Thus remarks Josephus, quite generally, that the Hebrew slaves became free after seven years; and, in Genesis already (xxix), the period of seven years is adopted as the ordinary extent of the service of a slave.

But the mildness towards the Hebrew servant was not limited to the period of his service only, but extended to the very moment of his release; he was not to be dismissed empty: "Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine-press: of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give to him." This is commanded as a duty of gratitude to God, who mercifully released the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, and who did not let them leave it "empty," but loaded with rich and precious presents (Deut. xv. 15; Exod. iii. 21, 22). And the gratuitous release of the Hebrew slave is enjoined to the Israelites with the most emphatical, soul-stirring words: "for the Lord thy God will bless thee in all that thou doest" (Deut. xv. 18). If the servant came into the house of his master as a single, unmarried man, he goes out alone; if he was married, his wife shares with him the right of liberty (ver. 3). But, "if his master giveth him a wife, and she beareth him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself" (ver. 4). However, as, according to Deut. xv. 12, 17, the maid-servant entirely participates in all the rights and duties of a man-servant, it is probable that our text speaks of *Canaanitish* women, whom the master gives to the servants, and who,

being illegitimate wives, according to the Mosaic law, do not accompany them into the condition of freedom.

But the cases were not impossible, that a slave, after a service of six years, estranged from all his former connections, and incapable of maintaining his independence, preferred to remain with his master, dear to him, perhaps, by custom, affection and gratitude. He might, besides, have married a Canaanitish maid-servant of his master, and, as she and her children remained always in the house of the master (ver. 4), love to his family induced him, perhaps, to prefer servitude to liberty. Such feelings are natural, and, from the ordinary point of view, well justifiable. But such practice would, in two essential points, have been in direct opposition with the leading principle of the Mosaic theocracy. It would, firstly, in the lapse of time, have produced a large multitude of dependent slaves of Israelitish descent, and, instead of a community of free citizens, with equal rights, the state would, in a few centuries, have been divided into a governing and a serving part, to its own deep degradation. Thus were, in Attica, according to the census made when Demetrius Phalereus was archon (B.C. 309), 21,000 free citizens, and not less than 400,000 slaves, (although many of the latter might have been of foreign origin, and the numbers may be in some degree corrupted). But it would, secondly, soon have destroyed the supreme sovereignty of God as the only Lord of *all* Israelites, and would have reduced a numerous class of born Hebrews into a state of submission which could not but disturb the pure and immediate relation between God and His people; and, further, intermarriages with heathens were not to be encouraged; the theocratical legislator could not respect a tie which was calculated to operate injuriously on the religious ideas of the slave.

Those servants, therefore, who, after six years of service, disdained the liberty,

will firmly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: 6. Then his master shall

and thus preferred the sovereignty of men to that of God, were ordered to be brought before the judges; and, as a lasting ignominy, their ear was to be perforated with an awl at the door or its posts, and then they remained the slaves of their masters for all their lives (see on ver. 6). Certainly, the practice of perforating the ears of slaves was a custom in use among many nations of antiquity. Thus, a freedman says, in Juvenal (Sat. i. 103):

“And I, in spite

Of your great lordships’ will, maintain
my right:

*Though born a slave, though my torn ears
are bored,*

’Tis not the birth, ’tis money makes the
lord.”—(*Dryden’s Translation*).

However, the same was done to children, who were, by their parents, consecrated to the service of a deity. Further, even now, many Orientals perforate their ears, in order to wear ear-rings. But, with these ornaments much superstition was formerly connected; they served as amulets, which, sacred to the gods, were believed to keep off from the ears all evil enchantments. It is, therefore, not impossible, that the legislator, by branding the perforated ear as a disgrace, wished to prevent such superstition, and, in the course of time, abolish it, in which endeavour he seems, indeed, in this indirect manner, to have succeeded. As parallel customs, we mention, that the Roman slaves were manumitted in three different modes: 1st, by *vindicta* (see *infra*); 2nd, by *census*, that is, if the slave, at the lustral census, gave in his property at the bidding of his master; and, 3rd, by *testament* of his master. As the Mosaic law prescribes a certain ceremony if a servant is destined to perpetual slavery, so a certain form was followed in the most common manner of manumission, that *per vindictam*; and it is described as follows: “The master brought his slave

before the magistrates, and stated the grounds of the intended manumission. The licitor of the magistrates laid a rod (*fetusca*) on the head of the slave, accompanied with certain formal words, in which he declared that he was a free man *ex jure Quiritium*. The master, in the meantime, held the slave, and, after he had pronounced the words: ‘*hunc hominem liberum volo*,’ he turned him round, and let him go (*emisit e manu*), whence the general term of the act of manumission” (*Smith, Dict. of Antiq. p. 730*).

7—11. A law follows concerning maid-servants, which, compared with Deut. xv. 17, offers, at first glance, a peculiar difficulty; but it disappears at a closer examination. According to that passage in Deuteronomy, the maid-servant is to obtain her liberty like the man-servant, in the seventh year, and, if she declines it, she is to be marked with the same sign of servitude as the latter; whereas, according to our passage, “she shall not go out as the men-servants do,” quite different regulations are enjoined concerning her release. But the reconciliation is simply this. In general, the laws about man-servants are, in their whole extent, applicable to maid-servants also. But there was a peculiar class of the latter, whom the father sold to a master, in order to serve him as a consort of second rank. Now, if the master granted her these connubial rights, or if he gave her to his son in the same quality, she remained for ever in his house, without becoming free after six years; for, in the former case, she enjoys the rights of a wife, in the second, those of a daughter; and her position is in no manner to be compared with that of ordinary maid-servants. The only differences between such alliances and legal marriages, are, perhaps, that they are concluded without the usual presents and dissolved without a letter of divorce. The offspring of both have equal rights, with regard to their position in the family and

bring him to the judges, and shall bring him to the door, or to the door-post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever.

to inheritance (Comp. Deut. xxi. 10—14). But, if neither the master, nor one of his sons, performed to her the promised duties, he had not the right to sell her to another master, "since he had dealt deceitfully with her," and she goes out free immediately, without being bound to wait to the seventh year. We can, therefore, not approve of the opinion of Michaelis, Jahn, Rosenmüller, Hävernick, and others, that Moses himself had later altered the law, and placed the maid-servants in every respect on an equal footing with the man-servants. But their rights are, in fact, identical; the Pentateuch is in perfect harmony with itself; for our text does not speak of common maid-servants, but of quite a different kind of females. Nor does our text treat, as the Rabbins believe, of young girls who have not yet attained the age of puberty. Not the remotest allusion confirms such conception. That polygamy, after the universal custom of the East, was not interdicted by Moses, although he did not favour it, is well known (see note on xx. 13).

1. *Judgments*, statutes, or laws, after which *judgment* is to be pronounced; therefore is this word naturally applied to such ordinances only as admit of a different opinion, for instance, concerning the right of slaves, strangers, etc., but not the Ten Commandments, which, as *principles* of morality, are incontrovertible, and equally acknowledged by all men. Anselm Bayley defines, therefore, that word correctly, as "moral laws or duties of society, arising from custom and mutual convenience."

2. According to Ebn Ezra, the specified legislation begins with the laws concerning the slaves, because there is no bitterer lot, than to stand in the power and under the will of a fellow-man. (See, however, *supra*, p. 289).—*In the seventh year*, after the commencement of the servitude, not in the Sabbath year.—About the Rabbinical acceptance of these laws,

see Kiddushin, fol. 14; where a difference is established in the treatment of those who have sold themselves and those who are sold by the judges.

3. *The man of a wife*, namely, of Hebrew descent.—*Then his wife shall go out with him*; from which words the Talmud (Kiddush. 22) infers the humane injunction: "he who buys a Hebrew servant is bound to support his wife and children also." It seems probable, from the context of these verses, that such servants are here alluded to, who have sold themselves with their wives, since it appears unjust, that the wife shall suffer servitude for the debts, and, perhaps, for the theft of her husband.

4. *If his master giveth him a wife*, namely, one of *Canaanitish* origin; for the Israelitish maid-servant went out free in the seventh year. The clause, that such wives shall remain in the house of the master together with their offspring, is not mentioned in the parallel passage, Deut. xv. 12—18.

6. *To the judges*; and so almost all interpreters; for the judges pronounce the sentence in the name of the deity. That the Israelites, like the Egyptians, honoured the judges like gods, as Michaelis believes, and called them, therefore, *Elohim*; of such a notion we have no trace whatever. Abarbanel, and after him Rosenmüller, Gesenius, and others believe, that the judges are sometimes called *Elohim*, because the courts of justice were in *holy places*, where God was enthroned (comp. Deut. xix. 17), which opinion is, essentially, little different from the reason above assigned; for certainly the judges are, in some respects, the *mouth* of the deity. On the other hand, the judges did not always fulfil their functions in sacred places, at least not when performing such ceremonies as perforating the ear of the servant; for the usage was that the judges sat at the gates of the town, or other free places open to public access. "It was a general

7. And when a man selleth his daughter to be a maid-servant, she shall not go out as the men-servants do.
 8. If she pleaseth not her master, who hath betrothed her

custom in the East," remarks Dr. Paxton (Illustrations of Scripture, ii. p. 455), "to brand their slaves in the forehead, as being the most exposed, and sometimes in other parts of the body. The common way of stigmatizing was by burning the member with a red-hot iron, marked with certain letters, till a fair impression was made, and then pouring ink into the furrows, that the inscription might be more conspicuous. Slaves were often branded with marks or letters, as a punishment for their offences; but the most common design of these marks was to distinguish them if they should desert their masters."—*For ever* is simply explained by Rashbam: "all the days of his life," as in 1 Sam. i. 22. Compare *ibid.* vers. 11, 28. This is, certainly, the most obvious interpretation. But, according to the Rabbins, it signifies only to the year of jubilee, when even the voluntary servant is to be restored to liberty; and Ebn Ezra remarks, in support of this opinion: "*For ever* means merely a *long* time (as in the above passage from Samuel); and none of all Israelitish periods of time is longer than the jubilee, and the return to liberty is, for the slave, like the *renewal* of the world" (see note on xii. 14). It must be allowed that this opinion stands in harmony with the principal idea, that in the year of jubilee *all* relations of persons and property assumed their original condition (see Lev. xxv. 41), and that the slave might thus come into possession of his ancestral property. But he has forfeited this right of a free citizen by spontaneously submitting to the yoke of slavery. And the same reasons which induced the slave to remain in the house of his master in the seventh year of his service, operated with still greater force in the year of jubilee. The expression "to serve for ever" is in Lev. xxv. 46, used of non-Israelitish servants, who shall be inherited by the children and are, indisputably, a *permanent* property

of the master, who has no obligation to release them. Where the text intends a service to the jubilee it employs clear and appropriate terms to express it; for instance, in Leviticus xxv. 40. From this passage, it is further evident that service to the jubilee was not considered ignominious; the degradation of the servant began only if he did not claim his liberty even after that epoch.—According to the Talmudists, the *doorposts* were selected for that act, because, marked as they were with the blood of the paschal-lamb, they were the first witnesses of the divine redemption and sovereignty; and the *ear* was to be perforated, because it had heard: "You are *my* servants, and not the servants of servants, and yet do not obey" (see, however, *supra*). After the analogy of xxix. 20 they further assert, that the *right* ear received that degrading mark. However, the *doorposts* might have been chosen in order to denote the permanent relation to the *house* of the master; and the *ear* was perforated as a symbolical sign of the obedience which the servant promises to his master for all future time (compare Psal. xl. 7). The act of perforation was performed publicly and before the judges, in order to prevent, as Michaelis correctly remarks, masters from pretending, contrary to truth, that their servants had promised to serve them during their lives; and, further, lest a master extort, by threats, such promise from the servant during the years of his servitude.

7. About the law of vers. 7—11 see *supra*.

8. If the master dislikes the maid-servant "whom he has betrothed to himself" he shall let her be redeemed; for he had bought her from her father only under the condition, and with the promise, to live with her in conjugal intercourse. But he was not permitted to sell her to a stranger, since he has dealt deceitfully with her; for by refusing to her the rights

to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her to 'strange people he shall have no power, since he hath dealt deceitfully with her. 9. And if he hath betrothed her to his son, he shall do to her after the manner of

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—A strange nation.

of a wife of second rank, he treacherously breaks the promise given to her father. Maimonides, Abarbanel, and, after them several others, explain thus: "The *father* shall not have the right to sell his daughter to a *foreign nation*." But this interpretation is not only grammatically questionable, but the subject to "he shall have no power" can only be that of the whole sentence, and that is the *master*, not the *father*, who is not mentioned in the whole verse.

9. *And if he hath betrothed her to his son*, etc. In the East, where under the influence of the burning climate the young men attain their puberty often earlier than the circumstances permit them to form matrimonial alliances, it is customary, that the parents, in order to obviate more dangerous excesses, give to their sons a maid-servant, whom they keep till their legal marriage, and who is then sent into a seraglio, whilst her children remain in the paternal house and are there educated. If the marriage proves barren, those children may even inherit the property of their father. The Mosaic rite is advantageously distinguished from these customs in one very essential point, that the concubine was even after the marriage of the son not heartlessly rejected, but was treated with every consideration like a daughter-in-law. For she received even then—

10. *a.* Her food; *b.* her apparel; and *c.* conjugal cohabitation. She was, therefore, in many respects, treated like a wife.

11. If this was not done, if those three points were not granted to her, she became *eo ipso*, free without redemption; for the master had violated the condition of the purchase.—Most of the Jewish interpreters refer the words "these three things" quite generally to the preceding

cases; namely, if the master does not betroth her to himself, nor gives her to his son, nor lets her be redeemed. But it is by far preferable to understand, with Abarbanel and others, the three things mentioned immediately before. Those three cases are, in our text, by no means distinguished clearly enough to offer themselves as readily to the mind of the reader as the three conditions of "food, raiment, and conjugal right." Moreover, the third case would be singularly indistinct: she goes out free, if the master does not let her be redeemed;—when? how long after the beginning of her servitude? and how far are his exertions for her redemption legally required?

These are the laws concerning servants; they deserve equal admiration on account of their efficiency and of their humanity; the former manifests itself in its harmony with the fundamental principles of Mosaism: personal liberty and exclusive subordination under God as the real Lord; the latter shows itself in the character of those laws, which are framed with constant attention to the interests of the servants. However, these excellent laws seem to have been but very imperfectly executed. For at the time of king Zedekiah, the prophet Jeremiah ordered, by the command of God, the tribes of Israel to let free the servants, in accordance with the Mosaic statutes. In the first impulse of enthusiasm they obeyed the command of the prophet; but after a short time they compelled their former slaves to return to the old yoke. Then the prophet complains, that their fathers also had not heeded these laws, nor given their heart to them; and thus they walked but in the wicked ways of their ancestors; and he adds one of the most rigorous admonitions and menaces, foretelling the complete extirpation of Judah. So im-

daughters. 10. If he taketh for him another *wife*, her food, her raiment, and her conjugal right, shall he not diminish. 11. And if he doth not these three to her, then shall she go out free without money.—12. He that

portant did the prophet justly consider these laws concerning the rights of servants (see Jer. xxxiv. 8—22).—In order to show the high dignity of these precepts in a still more striking manner, we observe, how far remote even the wisest and greatest philosophers and legislators of pagan antiquity were from such humane notions. Aristotle defines a slave to be: “a living working-tool and possession;” the same distinguished philosopher goes even so far as to divide mankind into two different races: the free, and *those who are slaves by nature*, whilst Mosaism establishes the natural equality of *all* as the very first of its fundamental principles. Other comparisons have been interspersed in the preceding remarks. Even foreign slaves were not unfrequently made heirs of the property of their Hebrew masters who had no sons; (compare Gen. xv. 2, 3; 1 Chron. ii. 34, 35; so also Job. xxxi. 13, 14), and the Gibeonites who were, for a flagrant fraud, made hereditary servants of the sanctuary, seem to have enjoyed a considerable amount of regard (Josh. ix. 26, 27; compare 2 Sam. xxi. 3, *et seq.*). It appears, in fact, from a close examination of the Mosaic laws about slavery, that the legislator was deeply impressed with the numberless evils and degradations with which that condition is attended; and that he

would fainly have abolished it altogether had the notions of his time and his people allowed it. A wise conformation to existing feelings and popular preconceptions pervades the whole Mosaic legislation; and if the top of this tree reaches into the serene heights of heaven, its roots are hidden in the earth. This principle of accommodation to old forms is a tribute which the lawgiver paid to humanity; but he infused a new spirit into those old forms, and converted thus prejudices into truths, and abuses into blessings. We shall, in the following law, have another very remarkable instance of that principle.—Ewald finds, in the course of Hebrew history, a sort of subordinate persons, who stand in the midst between slaves and free hirelings, and calls them *clients*, with a similar relation to their *patrons* as the Roman clients. But the instances and arguments, which he adduces, are not decisive; and what he calls clients, seem only to be the chief or superintending slaves in the houses of the rich. It may, lastly, be observed, that some critics (as Bertheau and others) have, in these precepts concerning slavery, as in several other instances, found ten different laws (which are indeed discernible), and attach to this circumstance some importance, ten being a significant number, which recalls the sanctity of the decalogue.

4. LAWS ABOUT MURDER. VERS. 12—14.

The laws about murder are here but briefly, though clearly and comprehensively, treated; the following passages contain the more minute provisions: vers. 20, 21, 28, 29; Numb. xxxv. 9—34; Deut. xix. 1—14; Levit. xxiv. 17, 21; Deut. iv. 41—44; compare Deut. xxi. 1—9; xxvii. 24, 25; Josh. xx.; 2 Sam. xiv. A careful comparison and combination of these passages will exhibit a

legislative system concerning homicide, in which manly severity is surprisingly coupled with humanity, and principle with expediency. Two leading ideas are easily discoverable: the perfect equality of all before the law, and a degree of respect and reverence for human life, which elevates this part of the legislation almost from criminal to moral laws. They solve the great problem of com-

smiteth a man, so that he dieth, shall be surely put to death. 13. And if a man doth not pursue insidiously,

bining safety and order with the greatest possible consideration and justice; and, in order to attain this aim, they are either prudently based on prevailing popular notions, or composed of new institutions energetically introduced. Those laws are naturally divided into two very different sections, namely: I. against premeditated murder: and, II. against unintentional manslaughter, or excusable homicide.

I. Murder, deliberate and prepenze, was, in every case, punished with death, and the same laws applied, in this respect, to the Israelite and the foreigner (Levit. xxiv. 22). To take redemption-money for such crime, as is the case among the Mohammedans, was not permitted; thus the rich murderer would have obtained a dangerous prerogative over the poorer criminal, and the principle of equality would have been destroyed. The murderer was cursed. Even from the altar, which was, in ancient times, the usual asylum of criminals, he could be taken and delivered up to death (see on ver. 4). The land was considered desecrated and polluted as long as the blood of the murderer had not been shed, and the dwelling-place of God seemed disgraced (see p. 277). So great was the horror against bloodshed, that even animals which had killed a person, were stoned, and their flesh was prohibited; the only end of such extraordinary precept was, to fill the people with deeper aversion to every sanguinary deed (see on ver. 28—32). If a corpse was found, and the murderer was unknown, and could by no effort be discovered, the elders of the nearest town killed, at a perennial river, a calf, which had not yet borne a yoke, and, washing their hands in the stream, in the presence of the Levites, the servants of God, pronounced the following solemn words: "Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be merciful, O Lord, to Thy people Israel, whom

Thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood to Thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them" (Deut. xxi. 1—9); and this is, again, a symbolical, impressive ceremony, to enjoin the sanctity of human life, even to the most untutored minds. The legislator ordered even, that the flat roofs of the houses, which are, in the East, much used, both by day and by night, should be surrounded with a parapet or battlement, lest anybody fall down, and the proprietor bring blood over his house (Deut. xxii. 8). To keep poison, was, according to the Rabbins, interdicted, and if it was found in any Israelite's house, he suffered death (*Josephus*, *Antiq.* IV. viii. 34). The deeper motive of all these laws has already been pointed out in our explanation of the sixth commandment; namely, because man is not only a living being, in whose blood is the soul, but is created in the image of God (Gen. ix. 6). But the *intention* of murder must be clear beyond any doubt. If the criminal lay in ambush for his victim, with a known malice in his heart; if he smote him with instruments, which manifestly show an intention of murder, whether they are of iron, or stone, or wood, he was considered a murderer; but at least two or three (that is, several) witnesses were required to prove the deed legally. In Deut. xix. 11, five conditions are specified, which, only when combined, constitute assassination: 1st, hatred against the fellow-man: 2nd, lying in wait for him: 3rd, the assault against him: 4th, smiting him with a mortal instrument or in a mortal manner: and, 5th, actual death.

II. But, if no intention of homicide was obvious, and death ensued from any uncontrollable cause, without the motives of hatred or malice, capital punishment would, after the just conception of the legislator, have been a crime, it would be "guilt of blood;" for innocent blood would be shed (Deut. xix. 10).

but God lets *him* fall into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee. 14. But if a man

But, on the other hand, impunity of such fatal heedlessness would have been highly impolitic; the personal safety of the citizens required measures for deterring even from carelessness. And here Moses devised an efficient expedient, admirably in harmony with the circumstances, and the notions of his people. Almost throughout the whole of antiquity, as still at present in the East, it devolved on the nearest relative of a murdered person, as a holy duty, to revenge his kinsman by the blood of his murderer, and he was, therefore, called the "avenger or redeemer of blood; he who neglected it was considered infamous. The Goel was, in fact, considered the legal heir of the rights and duties of his relative; he had to redeem the property sold by the latter from poverty (Levit. xxv. 24, *et seq.*); he had to ransom his person, if he had fallen into slavery (vers. 48, 49); to marry his widow, if he died without children; and he had the right to receive the property stolen from his relative, and returned by the penitent thief after his death (Numb. v. 8). Now, such custom of avenge of blood, may have been necessary for the protection of life in the infancy of unorganized states, when the governments were too weak to prosecute the perpetrators, or to inspire that fear of retaliation which alone deters the wicked. But such custom is, in fact, barbarous in its origin, and detestable and sanguinary in its effects. It has exterminated entire families and tribes; it often destroys the innocent, whom the Goel, in the heat of his rage, is not always able to distinguish from the guilty; and it tempts to the most insidious, most abject, and most immoral plans of persecution, of which the Arabic writers furnish us more than one revolting instance. Fain would Moses have abolished this whole system of avenge of blood, which became perfectly unnecessary as soon as a well-regulated state, with a powerful executive, was established, and the offender was sure to

be visited with the deserved punishment. But prejudices, and deeply-rooted traditional customs, cannot be eradicated by an abstract law. Such an attempt would be the work of an enthusiast, not of a judicious and sober judge of human nature. Moses did not try to *abolish* that custom, but to make it *innocuous*. He did not wish to exempt the *real* and *intentional* murderer from the just resentment of the surviving relative; he was permitted to kill him wherever he found him; and every magistrate was bound to assist him in his pursuit: but he wished at least to protect the merely *suspected*, and yet perhaps innocent, the *unintentional*, and perhaps quite virtuous, manslayer, from the indiscriminate rage of the excited relative. Therefore he ordered the appointment of six *cities of refuge* where such unfortunate persons might find an asylum. In order to facilitate his flight, it was enjoined on the authorities, as a duty, always to keep the roads leading to those towns in perfect repair, to which the traditional exegesis adds many other similarly humane precepts. As the Goel might yet, in spite of these precautions, kill him on his way to one of the cities of refuge, it was of the highest importance that they were, as much as possible, equally distributed throughout the land, and that their distance from each other was not too great. And these considerations were scrupulously attended to. Moses himself had ordered that three such cities be appointed immediately after their settlement in Canaan, and if the territory of the Israelites should extend, to set apart three more (Deut. xix. 2, 8, 9); and Joshua executed this command after the partial conquest of the land (Josh. xx. 7, 8). On both sides of the Jordan these cities were almost equally remote from each other, so that the greatest distance of one asylum to the next amounted to about twelve German miles, and the persecuted manslayer could thus, at the utmost,

cometh ¹cunningly upon his neighbour, to slay him

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Presumptuously.

not be more than six miles from a city of refuge. For the towns in the east of the Jordan were: Golan, in Bashan ($32^{\circ} 52' \text{N.L.}$), Ramoth, in Gilead ($32^{\circ} 25'$), and Bezer ($31^{\circ} 38'$); those in the west: Kadesh, in Galilee ($33^{\circ} 6'$), Shechem ($32^{\circ} 18'$), and Hebron ($31^{\circ} 25'$).

But such asylums were intended to harbour really *innocent* persons only, and to withdraw them from the revenge of the Goel; as, for instance, if a person cuts sticks in a forest, and the iron of the axe glides out from the handle, and accidentally kills a man who happens to be near (Deut. xix. 5). Therefore Moses ordered, further, that every fugitive should, at the gates of the city of refuge, be received by the elders or judges, who should hear and conscientiously consider his case; and, if they found him innocent, to assign him an abode in the city; but, if they believed him to be an intentional murderer, to deliver him up to the Goel for punishment (Deut. xix. 11—13; Josh. xx. 45). In difficult cases, he was sent back to the town where the deed was committed, and where the charge against him could best be investigated; and, if he was found guiltless, he was to be safely returned to the same city of refuge (Num. xxxv. 25). Both Moses and Joshua selected, as asylums, Levitical or priestly cities, obviously not only on account of their analogy with the Holy city, but also because the priests and Levites were the most intelligent portion of the nation, and the most thoroughly versed in the injunctions of the law; they were, therefore, best enabled to discern between appearance and truth. Thus, in this salutary institution of the cities of refuge, the possible abuse was obviated, that they protected actual criminals; for this would have been a pollution of the land, a compassion which would have endangered the safety of the state (Deut. xix. 11—13). And we see the circumspect wisdom of the legislator, in one instance, make harmless an old dangerous institution, and in another,

surround a new salutary one with beneficial limits.

In his asylum, the fugitive remained till the death of the High-priest; for his exile could as little be abridged, as his flight remitted, by redemption-money (Num. xxxv. 32). In a theocratical state, such an event is of the greatest moment; the High-priest was the representative of the people; and, with a new head of the state, new legal relations took place; it was the only natural epoch in the regular political existence, in which an unintentional murderer might be restored to liberty, unless it was intended to punish him for his offence during his whole life. And this would have been an unnecessary, perhaps an unjustifiable, severity. The unfortunate man, whom a divine decree made an innocent criminal, was sufficiently punished, if he forfeited his liberty for an indefinite period; if he was obliged to leave his property in strange hands, and to live in a foreign town and in a society unknown to him. But some severe punishment was necessary, if such ominous heedlessness was effectually to be prevented. And thus this measure of the legislator also stands in the just and wise medium. If the Goel killed the persecuted after the demise of the High-priest, he was punished with death; but if the manslayer left the city of refuge, and was found and killed by the Goel, the latter had no guilt of blood (Num. xxxv. 26, 27). According to some antiquaries, the death of the High-priest was, perhaps, chosen as the epoch of release, because it was believed, that, by the first great expiatory sacrifice, which the new High-priest offered (Exod. xxix.), such guilt was atoned; and Maimonides believes that the national grief at the death of the highest clerical officer was calculated to produce a general reconciliation. — In Athens, justifiable homicide was punished with exile of one year.

Exceptional severity was used in the punishment of such men, who, although

with guile; thou shalt take him from my altar, that he may die.—15. And he who smiteth his father or his

unintentionally, killed a woman with child, because thus *two* human lives were destroyed, and such a carelessness deserved to be punished as a crime (vers. 22, 23). On the other hand, a mitigation of the law took place, if a master chastised his slave so that the latter expired under the strokes (ver. 20). The master was certainly punished, but probably only with money. And this will be found less objectionable, if it is considered: 1. That certainly the master has never the *intention* to kill his servant, since that would be to his own injury in more than one respect. 2. That the master is often *compelled* to punish refractory servants; and that it would be impossible to keep discipline, with many slaves, if the master were not permitted to use a certain severity, which, in some unhappy cases, might, against the master's will, lead to fatal consequences (see on vers. 20, 21). It is further allowed by Moses to defend oneself against the *nightly* thief; and if the latter was killed in that defence, it was no crime of blood. But if this happened in day-time it was a crime, because the aid of the authorities might have been called in against the attacks of the thief (xxii. 1, 2). It is obvious, from the laws hitherto specified, that, in cases of murder, not the authorities, civic or criminal, but the Goel, took the initiative; that, therefore, the murderer, instead of escaping into one of the cities of refuge, could flee from the country altogether, and thus avoid the punishment. This is confirmed both by the analogy of other legislations, as those of the Greeks and Romans, and by examples from the history of the Israelites, for instance, that of David, Absalom, and Jeroboam.

Cities of refuge were not unknown to Greek antiquity, especially for insolvent debtors, for slaves who fled from the cruelty of their masters, and even for murderers. An especially celebrated city of refuge was Daphne, near Antiochia,

and the temple of Diana, at Ephesus, where the right of asylum was, in the course of time, more and more extended.

We need scarcely to observe, how infinitely wiser this discriminate legislation of Moses concerning murder is, than the vague precepts of Mohammed, which equally involve the innocent and the guilty (Koran ii. 173): "O you faithful, in cases of murder, the right of retaliation is prescribed to you: a free man for a free man, a slave for a slave, and a woman for a woman. But if the relative pardons the murderer, the latter may yet be punished by a legal judgment and with equity. This mildness and compassion comes from your Lord. But he who, after this, takes still revenge, may expect severe punishment." But the Koran (iv. 94) has also the following law about unintentional murder: "A faithful must not kill another faithful, except if this happen accidentally. But he who kills a believer undesignedly shall, as an expiation, redeem a believer from captivity and pay a sum to the family of the murdered, except if they remit it to him. If the killed is of a people which lives in hostility with you, but was himself a believer, the atonement is, to release a faithful from captivity. But, if the people is in friendship with you, a ransom must be paid to the family, and a faithful redeemed from captivity. But he who is unable to pay this, shall fast instead during two successive months." And in Sur. xvii. 35: "If a person has been unjustly killed, we have given his heir power to persecute him; but he must not be more cruel than necessary in killing him." According to Chardin, the Persian judges delivered the murderer up to the Goel with the following words: "I hand over to you the murderer, in accordance with our laws; revenge the blood which he has shed, but remember that God is just and merciful."

12. This verse expresses the general principle, which was already pronounced

mother, shall surely be put to death.—16. And he who stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his

in Gen. ix. 6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed"; but applies, of course, only to premeditated murder, that is, such homicide, as originated in internal enmity, and was executed with *consciousness*, or a *homicidium dolosum*. Although the Mosaic code contains no direct precepts concerning manslaughter committed in the excitement of the moment, in passion, drunkenness, etc., it may be concluded, from analogy that it was not treated with the severity of a premeditated murder, and shared perhaps the same privileges as the justifiable homicide, which seems, indeed, to be implied in Num. xxxv. 22: if one person kills another "*suddenly* without enmity." According to an addition in Targum Jonathan, the murderer is to be killed *with the sword*; generally he understands the expression: "he shall be put to death," to mean *strangulation*, a punishment still very prevalent in the East. About *lapidation*, see on vers. 15, 17; and about the different kinds of capital punishment in use among the Hebrews, see *Winer*, *Bibl. Dict.* ii. p. 11.

13. About unintentional homicide.—*But God let him fall into his hand*, that is, if it be done by God's inscrutable design, beyond human foresight or control; for everything, the cause and end of which is unknown, is referred to God as the immediate author, who pursues, in all occurrences, His own sublime schemes. Thus is this conception of the Old Testament far superior to the belief of the classical nations in a blind fate, to which even the Gods must bend.—According to the Rabbins, Moses already appointed even in the desert such places of refuge for involuntary homicide, perhaps always near the altar (ver. 14) or in the camp of the Levites.—It is customary among the Bedouins of the present time, that the murderer, in order to avoid the revenge

of the Goel, leaves the land for some time, during which the relatives try to redeem the murder by a sum of money, a practice which was not unknown to the ancient Greeks. But it is evident, how much this differs from the well-regulated and systematically balanced legislation of Moses on this subject, who did not permit an *intentional* murder to be redeemed by a degrading ransom, as ignominious for the relatives of the murderer as of the murdered; nor were the rich encouraged, more boldly to risk sanguinary deeds than the poor.

14. The ordinary place of refuge open to the persecuted murderer, was the altar of a sanctuary, the horns of which he touched (1 Kings i. 50; ii. 28, *et seq.*). This custom prevailed, to a great extent, among the Greeks and Romans, whose poets and historians frequently allude to it. Among the Arabians also the avenging of blood ceased in holy places. This was customary long before Mohammed's time, in the whole neighbourhood round Mecca, especially in the holy month of assembly.—But the unconditional regard for all who sought refuge at the altar, might lead to serious abuses, and an agreement with unprincipled priests might have given permanent support to many punishable crimes. Therefore Moses ordained, that an intentional murderer—according to the Rabbins even an officiating priest—could be taken from the altar and led to death; and the Old Testament furnishes us a striking instance of the strict adherence to this law in the history of Joab, who having insidiously killed Abner, was on the command of Solomon killed at the very altar, whither he had fled for refuge (1 Kings ii. 28—34). But the unintentional manslayer found protection at the altar, till he could, without danger from the Goel, undertake his flight to the next city of refuge.

5. VIOLATION OF THE RESPECT DUE TO PARENTS. VERS. 15, 17.

In the next three verses punishment of death is threatened to three crimes, which

cause no bloodshed, but are moral offences of a flagrant character; for the

hand, he shall surely be put to death.—17. And he who curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to

fifteenth verse treats of *violence* done to the parents, the sixteenth of *manstealing*, and the seventeenth of *cursing* the parents. It is, therefore, clear that vers. 15 and 17, necessarily belong together, and we are here spontaneously reminded of the remark of Josephus, quoted by Rosenmüller: "the laws were written down by Moses sporadically, and as they were communicated to him by God" (*Antiq.* IV. viii. 4). The Sept. places, indeed, ver. 17 before ver. 16.—We have in the notes on the fifth commandment pointed out the fact, that, according to the notions of Mosaism, the parents are considered as the earthly representatives of divine holiness; and that, therefore, the offences against the former are punished with the same rigour as the transgressions against the latter. It is thus natural, that not only the wicked *deed* committed against parents (ver. 15), but also the impious *word* (ver. 17) was punished with death; for violation of filial duties is, from that point of view, commuted into a purely theocratical, that is, a *civil* crime. Therefore, the chastisement of disobedient children was not, as was the case with the Romans, left to the parents; but the worldly judges enquired into such offences, and, if children were found guilty of a rude misdemeanour (according to the Talmud, of a stroke, which caused a wound), or of the utterance of imprecations, they were stoned or strangu-

lated (*Deut.* xxi. 18—21), just as those who cursed the name of God were stoned (*Lev.* xxiv. 10—16). About parricide, Moses enacted as little a law as about child-murder, or as Solon about the former crime, and perhaps from the same reason, because he believed that nobody would commit it. Nor did Romulus, according to Plutarch, make any provision against that crime (compare p. 276). However, if really such nefarious deed ever occurred among the Israelites, it was not difficult to decide how to punish it, since even the stroke and the contumacious word, were thought horrid offences deserving death. The punishment of lapidation was executed before the gates of the town; the witnesses, who had given evidence before the judges against the disobedient son, threw the first stones; then followed the whole people (*Deut.* xv. 5—7). For there existed in the Hebrew monarchy no regularly appointed executioners; and as every offence was directed against the state and against the public order, the whole people had an interest in punishing it; the infliction of the penalties of the law lost thus much of its cold-hearted barbarity, and was dignified by a higher political and moral element. The original manner of lapidation was probably a tumultuous throwing of stones by the mob, as appears from passages like *Exod.* xvii. 4; *2 Kings* ii. 31, etc.

6. ABOUT KIDNAPPING. VER. 16.

"He who stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death." The same law is repeated in *Deuteronomy* xxiv. 7; from which passage it is evident, that it treats of kidnapping a *Hebrew*; as in our verse also *Targum Onkelos* and *Septuagint* add. And thus the severity of the punishment, death, without the possibility of redemption, cannot appear surprising. For all Israelites are considered as free citizens with inalienable

and equal rights, of which they can never be entirely divested (see on vers. 1—11). Now it is natural, that he who steals an Israelite will, in the rarest cases, keep him as his slave or sell him to an Israelite, as the injured person could, in the Holy Land, easily find means to inform the authorities of his fate, and thus cause the punishment of his criminal master. The latter, therefore, generally sold the kidnapped individual to foreign merchants into distant lands, either to Egypt-

death.—18. And if men strive together, and one smiteth another with a stone, or with *his* fist, and he dieth not, but is thrown upon his bed: 19. If he rise again, and

tians, who commanded the land-commerce to the south, or to Phœnicians, who influenced the trade by sea to the west; and opportunities of selling must have easily offered themselves, as Palestine was situated in the exact centre of the commerce of the East. But by such sale, free Israelites became *permanent* slaves; they forfeited, with their liberty, their chief characteristic as Hebrews, and were thus lost to the Hebrew community, the more so, as the exclusive intercourse with pagans must necessarily defile the purity of their faith, and gradually accustom their thoughts to idolatry. For this reason it was, in the Mosaic law, interdicted to sell even thieves into foreign countries, because thereby *souls* are, as it were, extirpated from Israel. Thus he who kidnapped Israelites and sold them to other countries justly deserved death, especially if we consider the most melancholy and bitter lot to which the slaves of heathen nations were generally doomed. The spiritual and physical murder was not too severely punished with death. And in this sense Philo remarks, pathetically: "The kidnapper also is a thief, but of the most precious treasure on earth. Everybody, therefore, whose mind harbours a love for virtue, must hate the kidnapper intensely and implacably, for he does not blush, for the sake of cursed gain, to impose the yoke of servitude upon beings who, by birth, reason, and nature, are his perfect equals. They sell them, for filthy lucre, to slave-mongers or to others; they make them serve strangers far from their native country, so that they cannot, even in their dreams, hail the land of their ancestors, or enjoy, in the remotest degree, any delightful hope."

No doubt that crime was very extensively committed from early times. Joseph was, by his own brothers, sold to foreign merchants, who again sold him to a foreign master. A very severe mea-

sure, to deter from such misdeeds, was, therefore, necessary. Besides, this slave-trade was so lucrative, that a pecuniary fine would have been of no effect, as the unprincipled kidnappers could, in the rare cases of detection, easily bear the mulct from their considerable gains. The energetic rigour of this law is, therefore, perfectly wise, and it stands in favourable contrast to the gradual and fluctuating legislation of the Romans on this subject. In earlier times, the Lex Fabia ordained, that if a person bought a freeman, or libertinus, against his will, or if he persuaded another person's male or female servant to run away from a master, or if he concealed him, he was liable to the penalties of the law. Here, two things are confounded which are clearly distinguished in the Mosaic code. Stealing a free man, and making him serve as a slave, can certainly not be brought into the same category with the far less culpable offence of persuading a slave to escape from his master, or to protect him on his flight. The latter was, with laudable humanity, even commanded by the Mosaic law as a duty, whilst the former, if his motive was because he wished to possess the slave himself, is prohibited in the tenth commandment. "Both kinds of man-stealing," says Michaelis, "are very different; by the one, the master of the slave loses only a property, which is valued by money, and which can be reimbursed; by the other, a free man lost something quite invaluable, his liberty, and himself." Further, the penalty of the Lex Fabia was merely pecuniary, which might, perhaps, have been sufficient in the first times of the republic, when the opportunities for the slave-trade were yet rather limited. Later, the punishment was converted into labour in the mines, or crucifixion for the *humiliores*, and confiscation of half their property for the *honestiores*, an invidious distinction, of which the Mosaic law is perfectly free.

walk abroad upon his staff, then shall he who smote *him* be quit; but he shall pay *for* the loss of his time, and shall cause him to be thoroughly healed.—20. And if

By a later *Senatus consultum*, the Fabian law was renewed with more rigid clauses, in order to encourage the recovery of runaway slaves. Among the Athenians, kidnapping was always capitally punished.

Or if he be found; for, as regards the penalty, there can be little difference whether a person, after having stolen a free Israelite, lets him serve as a slave to another, or uses him himself as such, although, as we have observed above, the former was, no doubt, by far the more frequent case. Ancient expositors explain

this law thus: if the stolen Israelite was, before his being sold, found in the hand of the kidnapper; and they add, that both conditions were required to constitute the crime: the stolen person must have been seen in the house of the kidnapper, and then have been sold to another, for then only is the offence perfectly clear; but this distinction neither lies in the words of the text, nor in the spirit of the legislation.

17. See on ver. 15.

7. GENERAL PERSONAL INJURY INFLICTED UPON A FREEMAN. VERS. 18, 19.

The following laws (to ver. 36), treat mostly of *damages* and *injuries*, not of homicide, and the following verses provide for the case, that a *free man* was injured in no chief member of the body. Namely, if a person beats, in a quarrel, a *free* Israelite, or a stranger, so that the latter are thrown on a sick-bed, but recover again so far as to be able to walk about by the aid of a staff, without having lost any of the principal limbs, he who had beaten them is free, from severe punishment, but he must pay to the injured persons for the loss of their time and must cause their cure from his own means. If a chief member has been injured, the *right of retaliation* takes place (see note on vers. 24, 25; compare Levit. xxiv. 19, 20). If the beaten freeman dies *in consequence of the wounds*, however long time afterwards, the offender is treated after the general laws about murder, that is, it is enquired whether the wounds were inflicted *designedly* or *accidentally*. Impunity was naturally granted if another cause had co-operated to his death.

The stroke was, according to our text, inflicted with a *stone*, or the *fist*.—*Then shall he who smote him be quit*. The Rabbins explain these words thus: "then the offender shall be released from the prison in which he was incarcerated till it was ascertained whether the consequences of the stroke would be fatal or not." The delinquent must pay a two-fold fine: 1st. the value of the time which the injured person lost; and 2nd, the whole expences of healing, or, according to Josephus, "as much as he paid to the physicians," to which the Rabbins add: 3rd, for the pain: and 4th, the disgrace. The Romans also had a similar law; but it ordains a compensation for all future losses also which might arise from disabling a member, for instance, if a hand, etc., was maimed, whereas Moses prescribes only an indemnification for the time of the illness. On the other hand, the Roman law dispenses with a compensation for disfigurement, which the Mosaic code, according to the Rabbins, enforces.

8. PERSONAL INJURY INFLICTED UPON A SLAVE. VERS. 20, 21.

Chastisement of a *servant* could not be forbidden; without that means of enforcing obedience, the keeping of servants would, in fact, have been impossible (see on ver. 12—14). But more than this Moses did not allow. It is a great mis-

take to suppose, that the Hebrew master had complete and arbitrary rule over his servants, that he had the power of life and death over them. It might be correct, that other nations of antiquity considered their slaves as their perfect property,

a man smiteth his man-servant or his maid-servant with a rod, and he dieth under his hand, 'it shall surely be avenged.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—He shall . . . be punished.

especially the captives of war, whose lives the victors spared, when they had the power to kill them as their enemies. But quite different is the Mosaic law with regard to the life of a slave. To the Hebrews the principle does *not* apply: "among all nations we can uniformly observe, that the masters were permitted the full right over life and death of their slaves"; they did not acknowledge that unfeeling rule: "It is admitted that servants cannot complain of any injury"; nor did they content themselves with the later vague enactment, that it should not be lawful, "to deal too rigorously with the slaves." The life of the Hebrew slave was, in reality, shielded and considered sacred like that of a free man, with one almost indispensable modification; namely, if the master chastised his servant with a stick, or any other light instrument of a similar nature, it was to be supposed, that he intended only to bring him back to obedience and discipline, but not to injure him severely. But if he carried this punishment, however lawful in itself, to such extent that the servant died under his hands, he was himself punished; but if he continued to live one or two days more, the master suffered no punishment: "for it is his money," that is, the death of his servant is, in itself, to him a sufficient loss. — From these principles follows naturally: 1. If a person smote the servant of *another*, the usual laws about such offences came into power; and 2. If a master smote his own servant with an instrument, which lets us suppose no mere chastisement, as with a sword, an axe, a stone, or the like, he was treated like a murderer, and enjoyed no privileges as a master: for the use of murderous arms against free men also was considered to involve the intention of murder (Num. xxxv. 16—18); and, 3. If the servant lived some days after the ill-treatment of his master, the latter had to pay no fine

to anybody, for he himself was the only person who suffered a damage; he lost in the slave a very valuable property.

But that mitigation of the law about homicide naturally took place only with regard to *foreign* slaves; for the Israelitish servant was in all respects treated like the free man; since he was but a *temporary* hireling, who after six years returned to the original state of independence; and a murder committed against him exposed the master to the usual persecution of the Goel. Besides, a foreign slave only can properly be called "the money, that is, the permanent property, of the master"; for he only was really bought (Lev. xxv. 44—46; compare Gen. xvii. 12, 13), and was, like all other property inherited by the descendants. The Egyptian law punished the murder of a free man and of a slave equally with death. Herewith the Mosaic law essentially coincides; with this difference, that it judiciously distinguishes between misadventure and unfeeling barbarity on the part of a master. In Egypt, besides, even a witness who did not prevent a murder, if it was in his power to do so, was considered guilty of capital punishment.

From all this, it is evident, that an *accidental* death of a *foreign* slave in consequence of *just* chastisement was not punished capitally: for *a*) the phrase "it shall be avenged," instead of the usual expression, "he shall be put to death," denotes merely punishment in general; *b*) the difference of the punishment between the case, that the servant dies immediately, or one or two days later, could not be so very great; but capital punishment, in the first case, would certainly be quite abnormal, if the master is perfectly free in the second: "because it is his money"; and *c*) the analogy of other eastern nations, especially of the Mohammedans, teaches us that offences against slaves were

21. But if he continue a day or two, ²it shall not be avenged, for he is his money.—22. If men strive, and

² *Engl. Vers.*—He shall . . . be punished.

not so severely punished. Mohammed prescribes death only, "if a free man kills a free man, or a slave a slave," but not if a free man killed a slave, which is, however, according to the preceding exposition, so mitigated in the Mosaic right in favour of the servants, that the death must be a consequence of a *just chastisement*; if arbitrariness or malice is the cause of the servant's death, it is considered as a felonious homicide. Therefore, the Talmudical interpretation that execution by the sword was the punishment for killing a slave, is doubtful; it is rather probable, that in such cases the judge, after having carefully examined the cause, imposed upon the master an adequate fine, which was certainly not less than thirty silver shekels, the average price of a slave. The general principle laid down in ver. 12: "he who beats a man so that he dies, shall be put to death," cannot be adduced as a proof that the master, who was the accidental

cause of his servant's death, was capitally punished. For that principle applies evidently to felonious homicide only, as the following verse, which treats of justifiable homicide, clearly shows. But it is, in fact, difficult to comprehend the logic of those, who will, internally, admit no difference between mere *misdeed* and *felony*; as if the accidental manslayer is likewise to be considered as a wicked and depraved being, to whom God sends such accidents as a deserved punishment. If this were the case, why does the Mosaic law so anxiously provide for his safety in cities of refuge, and characterize his death as shedding innocent blood? Those critics are obliged to take their models of legislation from Pittakus and—the Icelanders! Perfectly free from punishment was the master only then, if the chastisement of the slave did not occasion the loss of any principal member, which case is provided for in vers. 26 and 27.

9. INJURING A MEMBER OF A FREE MAN. VER. 22—25.

The following law treats of corporal injuries in a certain complicated case, and breathes also the character of humane consideration for the weaker party, and of respect for the personal safety of the people. It may not be unfrequent in the East, that women throw themselves between their quarrelling husbands, or other men, in order to compose the strife by their entreaties, and even by their mere appearance, which is the more likely among the Hebrews, if we consider the esteem and liberty which the women enjoyed (see p. 279—281, and on ver. 22). Now if such a woman was with child, and if one of the men, from heedlessness or design, smote her thus that she aborted, he had, on complaint of her husband, to pay a fine according to the estimation of the judge. But if the woman suffered besides another bodily injury, the legislator ordains: "thou

shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." This precept, which is here applied to an individual case is in Lev. xxiv. 19, 20, thus generalized to a fundamental law: "If a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him" (compare Judg. i. 7; 1 Sam. xv. 33). This law, which is known under the name of *right of retaliation*, has been branded as barbarous, and has been more than once adduced as a triumphant proof of the sanguinary character of Mosaism, especially as the New Testament (Matth. v. 38, 39) seems to disapprove of it, and commands: "But I say to you, That you resist not evil: but whosoever will smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also (compare Jer. iii. 27; *Talmud*, Sabb. 88 b).

hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart *from her*, and yet no mischief follow: he shall surely be

But for the unimpassioned, impartial and historical criticism of our law, the following points are to be considered:—

1. Moses has not *introduced* that principle of retaliation, but only *tolerated* it, from the same wise motive and with the same profound knowledge of human nature, which induced him not to interfere with polygamy, avenging of blood, and many other old institutions, which, as we can clearly infer, he would have gladly abrogated, had he not feared to meet, in such attempt, with insuperable resistance. The right of retaliation is the first, the most natural, and among all primitive nations the most usual method, of punishing for personal attacks, and of deterring from them for the future; and it is, in fact, based on no other principle than that, from which the avenging of blood has sprung. It was an ancient Egyptian law, that scribes who kept false accounts, made erasures from public documents, forged a signature, or altered any agreement without the consent of the parties, were punished with the loss of both their hands, on the principle, that the offending member should suffer. Therefore, it is not only still generally resorted to in the East, but was applied among those nations of antiquity which we still admire, in many respects, as models of civilisation and refinement, the Greeks and Romans: it was even retained by that legislator, with whose name we are accustomed to connect a high notion of humanity and wisdom, Solon; but it was sanctioned by him in a form which throws a brighter and more favourable light on the leniency of the Hebrew legislator. For he ordains: “if a person strike out one eye of another, he shall lose both his eyes.” Further, the Roman Twelve Tables contain the following law: “if a person injures another’s member, there shall be retaliation, unless both parties come to an agreement;” and in the *Institutiones* we read about the

historical development of this law: “The punishment for a disabled member was, according to the law of the Twelve Tables, the retaliation: but for a broken bone, pecuniary fines were fixed, considering the great poverty of the earlier Romans. But later the prætor permitted those, who had suffered an injury, to value it, so that the judge condemned the offender either to that sum, which they had mentioned, or to a smaller fine, as he thought proper. But the penalty fixed by the law of the Twelve Tables, fell into disuse; and that which the prætors proposed was acted upon in the courts of justice. For, according to the degree of the dignity and the standing in life, the estimation of the injury becomes greater or smaller.” This leads us spontaneously—

2. To another mitigating circumstance in our opinion on the Hebrew right of retaliation. Bodily injuries could undoubtedly, by agreement with the sufferer, be redeemed with pecuniary compensation; and a literal retaliation of member against member, did not take place, except in that very rare case, that the offended party was implacably revengeful. For whilst Moses expressly and emphatically interdicted the redemption of a murder by money (Num. xxxv. 31), he enjoins no similar precept with reference to injuries, which are certainly open to an amicable arrangement conformable to old customs. Thus the Twelve Tables also speak of the right of retaliation only in the case that both parties come to no agreement; and the passage above quoted from the *Institutiones* shows, that the literal talio was soon entirely abolished, instead of which, in all cases of personal injury, a pecuniary fine was substituted. And this was indubitably the case in the juridical practice of the Hebrews also; so remarks Josephus (*Antiq.* IV. viii. 35): “He who maims any one, let him undergo the like himself, and be deprived of the

punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and 'he shall bring *it* before the judges.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—He shall pay as the judges determine.

same member of which he has deprived the other, unless he who is maimed will accept of money instead of it; for the law makes the sufferer the judge of the value of what he has suffered, and permits him to estimate it, unless he will be more severe." The Talmud distinctly states it as a principle: "for the soul of a murderer you shall not take redemption, but you may even take redemption for such principal members which are not reproduced"; and Maimonides asserts, after the same authority, that a member was not actually maimed for a member, but that its value to the injured person was estimated and paid by the offender. And thus was this law understood by almost all Jewish interpreters, who supported their opinion by the remotest tradition (with the only exception of the Sadducees and Karaites); and highly interesting is the discussion of Saadiah with the Karaite Ben Suta, which Ebn Ezra quotes, and which shows at the same time, that even the wording of the holy text admits unforcedly of such interpretation:—"Rabbi Saadiah said: We cannot interpret this verse literally; for if a person strikes the eye of another so that he loses the third part of his sight, how is it possible to inflict upon him exactly a similar wound, without addition or diminution, so that he shall not perhaps lose the entire use of his eye? And this is still more difficult with a burning, or wound, or stripe; for if they were inflicted on a dangerous part, they may cause death; and this is absurd.—But Ben Suta rejoined: Is it not written in another passage (Lev. xxiv. 20): 'If a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done so shall it be given to him?—Saadiah: The sense of this passage is: so shall the punishment be imposed upon him.—Ben Suta: But we read plainly: 'As he hath done, so it shall be done to him' (Ib. ver. 19).—Saadiah: Behold, Samson had said quite similarly: 'as they

have done to me, so will I do to them' (Judg. xv. 11); and yet did Samson not take (or intend to take) their wives and give them to others; *but simply he took revenge upon them* [compare Lev. xxiv. 18: "he that killeth a beast shall pay for it; beast for beast"].—Ben Suta: Then, if the offender was poor, what shall be his punishment? [if we substitute a fine?].—Saadiah: If a blind man strikes out the eye of another, what shall be done to him? The poor man might become rich and then pay; but the blind man could, after your literal acceptance of the text, never suffer the deserved punishment. And we must accept it as a rule, that we cannot thoroughly understand the precepts of the Law, unless we adhere to the explanations given by our sages of blessed memory. For as we have received the written Law from our forefathers, so have we received the Oral Law from them; there is no difference between the one and the other in this respect."

The reader finds in this passage also an allusion to the difficulty, nay impossibility, to exercise the retaliation with exact justice, since it is very precarious, in spite of the greatest carefulness, to injure the member of another, only just as much as he has himself injured his neighbour. Michaelis also has called attention to this point, and, besides, to the circumstance that the pain of one who is previously informed, that an eye will be coolly torn out of him, is by far more acute and excruciating, than the sufferings of one who loses it suddenly and unexpectedly; for the former feels the agony a thousand times magnified in anticipation, by his tormented imagination: therefore if equal justice, strictly and severely balanced, was the end of the legislator, the literal exercise of the retaliation would be the least appropriate means of securing it. However, it must not be overlooked, that the *jus talionis* was

23. But if *any* mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, 24. Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand,

intended at the same time as a *punishment* for crimes and a *warning* for ill-disposed persons; and that, therefore, the offender justly suffers more pain than he, who had been innocently mutilated. However, thus much is certain, that the redemption by money, or its equivalent, was the usual Hebrew practice in cases of personal injury; and it is still so among the Arabs, of which Burckhardt gives a clear instance, which is also quoted by Kitto: "Bockhyt called Djolan a dog; Djolan returned the insult by a blow upon Bockhyt's arm; and Bockhyt wounds Djolan's shoulder with a knife. The Kadi now reckons thus: Bockhyt owes to Djolan, for the insulting expression, one sheep; for the wounding him in the shoulder, three camels; Djolan owes to Bockhyt, for the blow on his arm, one camel; therefore remain due to Djolan, one sheep and two camels."— Even the Koran (v. 49) permits redemption by alms; and Lane (Modern Egypt i. 145) thus describes the practice at present in use in Egypt: "The fine for a member that is single (as the nose) is the whole price of blood, as for homicide; for a member of which there are two, and not more (as a hand) half the price of blood; for one of which there are ten (a finger or toe), a tenth of the price of blood: but the fine of a man for maiming or wounding a woman, is half of that for the same injury to a man [the Mosaic code makes no such difference between the two sexes; if there is one, our text shows rather a consideration for the weaker sex]: and that of a free person for injuring a slave, varies according to the value of the slave." It is further evident, that the blind and indiscriminate retaliation would in no manner be just, of which fact ancient commentators and philosophers already have pointed out several examples; for instance, a one-eyed person has the misfortune to knock out, in a passion, one eye of another, who is in the enjoyment of his two sound eyes,

would it be just, in order to exercise the *jus talionis*, to deprive such a man of the only eye left to him? and would this punishment be commensurate with the offence he has committed? Just as little as if a painter's right hand was cut off, with which he supports himself and his family, because he injured the hand of a singer, who maintains himself by his voice. — If we compare the right of compensation for corporal injuries after the Hebrew and the Roman law, we do not find in the former the tyrannical distinction which the latter admits between the limbs of a poor and a rich man, of a person of high and low rank; *all* citizens are equal before the law, and the injuries of *all* are valued after the same standard; the only distinction adopted in the Mosaic code is that between free men and servants; and even the latter had no reason to be dissatisfied with the provisions introduced by Moses in those cases, of which our text treats (see on vers. 26, 27).

3. The law of retaliation evidently applies only to *intentional* mutilations, inflicted by lurking deceit, by insidiousness or treachery; this we are justified to infer from the analogy of unintentional homicide, which was only punished with a temporary exile; accidental injuries must, therefore, have been treated much more leniently. The case to which our text alludes forms an exception: if a woman with child was, by the carelessness of quarrelling persons injured; because, as we have already observed in p. 305, a severer punishment was necessary in a case, in which, besides the health of the mother, the thriving, or even the existence of the yet unborn offspring was endangered (see on ver. 23).

These arguments will suffice to convince the reader, that the Mosaic law of retaliation, far from being cruel and ferocious, as it has too often been decried, bears the same character of moderation and regard for human life, which dis-

foot for foot, 25. Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.—26. And if a man smiteth the eye

tinguishes the Mosaic law in all its enactments. It remains, therefore, only to refute the objection, that Christ appears in the Sermon on the Mount to reject this law of "eye for eye." With regard to this difficulty, we prefer to quote the words of Michaelis, who remarks (Mos. R. v. p. 60): "Christ does not blame the law of Moses: eye for eye, tooth for tooth; since he does, in that whole passage, not speak of Moses, whom he neither interprets nor refutes, but of a questionable moral preached by the Pharisees in the name of Moses. These confounded, as they have done more than once, *civil right* and *morality*; and if in the doctrines of ethics the question was proposed: How far am I allowed to pursue my revenge? they answered with words, which Moses did by no means address to the *offender*, but to the *sufferer* or the *judge*: 'eye for eye, tooth for tooth.' That Christ did not intend to contradict or blame the laws of Moses, but only the Pharisees, is evident, if we compare him with Moses. The Hebrew legislator addresses the magistrate, or the offender, who had inflicted personal injury upon his fellow-man, and speaks thus: 'Thou, criminal, hast deserved to give eye for eye, tooth for tooth; and thou, judge, art bound to condemn him to that punishment.'—But Christ manifestly addresses the *offended* person, and forbids him to be vindictive: 'You have heard, that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you, that you resist not evil; but whosoever will smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him thy other also.' How these last words are to be understood, and whether I am, indeed, to hold up my other cheek, if the one has been struck, does not concern me at present, for I cannot explain here the Sermon on the Mount. But as long as the people does not consist of citizens, who are entirely so as the Sermon on the Mount wishes them to be, civil laws, which, as Christ himself says, do

not permit several things on account of the hardheartedness of the people, would be extremely unwise."—We will not enter into the irrelevant attacks upon the Pharisees; but the chief point of this deduction is simple, that here *civil*, not purely *ethical* laws are specified; the former are enjoined, in order to deter the bad; they must, therefore, neither be too lenient, nor pre-suppose a state consisting entirely of "regenerated" citizens; and, in fact, our own Christian legislation could not dispense with similar principles; life is punished with life, and intentional injuries are visited with more than equivalent penalties. Not even the most sentimental and romantic legislator has ever had the fancy to pardon all criminals out of Christian love. For, in reality, every simple law in our penal codes is based on the *jus talionis*, with the limitation, that bodily mutilation is converted into an adequate pecuniary fine, or incarceration; but the same modification has been universally adopted by traditional Judaism. Quite different is the case with the *moral* law, if neither the person nor the property has been attacked, but insults and mortifications were inflicted; in such cases a perfect pardon is a religious duty; and the Mosaic law expressly prescribes: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart," or "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge; but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Lev. xix. 18, 19), to which principle we shall recur in due place. That the right of retaliation is just in *principle* and *theory*, is unquestionable; for it is an exact retribution of the offence committed; and the more impartial a legislation is, the more frequently is that principle applied as the leading idea. In *Mosaism*, it is distinctly pronounced as a general rule (Deut. xix. 19, 20); it is the foundation of the laws concerning murder (Gen. ix. 6), theft, false witness and corporal injury. But we must repeat, that, with the exception of murder, it was never carried out to the

of his man-servant, or the eye of his maid-servant, that it perish; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake. 27. And if he smite out his man-servant's tooth, or his

letter; prudence and moderation warned to insist upon a right, which, if executed with obstinate severity, would have been converted into a most inexcusable injustice.

22. It appears, that women endeavoured by their interference to reconcile the altercations of men, who had proceeded, or threatened to proceed to violence; a practice which, according to Kalbe (Descript. of the Cape of Good Hope, p. 405) is usual among the Hottentots: "If a woman steps between two contending men, they will give up their dissension for the present, and wait for an opportunity to resume their dispute in the absence of women. They never do the least harm to a female, not even in the hottest struggle and fiercest rage."—The concerned parties are ordered to appear before the judge, that he might either confirm the amount of compensation imposed by

the husband upon the offender, or reduce it, if he deem it exorbitant.

23. According to the Talmud, and in harmony with the preceding explanations, he who kills a woman in a quarrel shall only pay the *value* of life, since he did not *intend* homicide.

24. Here some members are enumerated for the sake of illustration; but the same principle, expressed in the text, is equally applicable to all other cases of mutilation. A strict anti-climax from the more important to the less essential members, which some have artificially found in our verse, seems scarcely intended by the sacred author.

25. According to Jewish tradition, the offender has in all these cases to pay 1. the damage; 2. the loss of time; 3. the expences of the cure; 4. the disfigurement; and 5. the pain. See p. 305.

10. INJURING THE MEMBER OF A SLAVE. VERS. 26, 27.

THE law about the mutilation of a *slave*, which comprises the servant of non-Israelitish descent also, is conceived in a spirit more favourable to the servant than the master. The loss of any member, from the most essential and noblest, the eye, down to the least indispensable, the tooth, if that loss is a consequence of brutal treatment on the part of the master, causes the immediate manumission of the slave (see on ver. 1—6. p. 289). It is unnecessary to point out the very important and efficient protection which this law secured to the subordinate persons. If the punishment might result in the loss of the servant, its excess was necessarily checked; for every master naturally refrained from risking so serious a consequence. The Rabbins enumerate twenty-four members, the mutilation of which they say is included in our law. This law is, in fact, perfectly analogous to the preceding one concerning bodily injuries

inflicted upon a *free* man. Here, in our verses, the *pecuniary* loss is the punishment of the master, for a slave is the property, which he loses by his cruelty (compare ver. 21); and so also is the mutilation of a *freeman* punished with a fine, except in unusual cases of irreconcilable vindictiveness. And thus the milder interpretation of the right of retaliation, as a pecuniary compensation, finds, from this side also, a substantial confirmation. The Rabbins apply this whole law exclusively to non-Israelitish slaves. The Hebrew slave, they say, was to be treated entirely like the free Hebrew citizen, and received, therefore, quite the same indemnifications as the latter (see on ver. 25), but had no claim to immediate release, which he obtained after six years, according to the general law about slaves. However, the master was scarcely bound to pay the injured slave for "the loss of time," which entirely belonged

maid-servant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake.—28. If an ox goreth a man or a woman, that they die; then the ox shall surely be stoned, and his flesh

to the master; nor was it necessary to command him to cause the cure of the slave, as this was his own interest. It is, therefore, all but certain, that our law treats of Hebrew as well as of foreign slaves. Punishments were sometimes indispensable; and against excesses in this respect our law secures to the servant a sufficient guarantee.—It appears that, in later times, the Roman

emperors often found it necessary to check the ill-treatment to which the slaves were exposed from the masters. Thus Hadrian banished a matron for five years because she acted cruelly against her maidservants from insignificant reasons, and it was felt that obedience of the servants is more effectually secured by moderation and kindness than by unfeeling severity.

11. INJURY CAUSED BY A BEAST. VERS. 28—32.

a. If the injured person is a free man (vers. 28—31).

b. If he is a slave (ver. 32).

SUCH injuries even as are caused by beasts, are considered and provided for by the circumspect legislator. As an instance, a goring ox is chosen; but the same law applies, probably, as the old interpreters assert, to all other animals also, and the Samaritan codex has, in ver. 28, an addition to this effect. Now, in order to implant the horror against murder, or any mutilation of the human body, by all possible means, such beasts as, in their wild instinct, caused the loss of a human life, were put to death, and their flesh was interdicted for all uses. For no crime whatever against the godlike image should remain unpunished, and every impression of the senses was called to aid, to increase the internal aversion to such nefarious deeds. Legislative acts against, and punishment of, animals, were, besides, not unusual in antiquity. According to Plutarch, Solon ordained, "that a dog, which had bitten, should be handed out to the authorities fettered with shackles four ells long." Demosthenes mentions a decree of Dracon, that not only men and animals, but even lifeless things, with which a man had been killed, should be removed from the land; and Pausanias relates a process against the *axe* of the priest of Zeus Polieus, because the priest himself had quitted the land. Michaelis remarks even, that so late as in the year 1540, the

sword with which a murder had been committed, in Toulouse, was, according to the sentence of the judges, hung up at the gallows, because the criminal could not be discovered. The Salic law of the old Franks, and that of the Anglo-Saxons, contained similar clauses. The anxiety of the Hebrew legislator, to prevent bloodshed by a series of impressive laws, seems, in fact, to have been rewarded by the happiest results, since that crime generally appeared in a surprisingly limited extent among the Hebrews, whilst the legislators of other ancient nations contented themselves with some unsystematic attempts which could not produce the desired effect.

It is natural, that the proprietor of the animal which had caused the mischief, was free from other punishment besides the loss of the beast. The case is, however, different, if the savage nature of the animal was known, and the proprietor had been duly warned; if some misfortune happened under such circumstances, not only the beast was killed, but the master also deserved death, as by his heedlessness human life had been sacrificed. However, as death occasioned by such accident could not be punished as severely as an intentional and deceitful murder, redemption by money is permitted, after a just and liberal valuation. If a slave was thus killed, his master re-

shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox *shall be* quit. 29. But if the ox were wont to push in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, so that he killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death. 30. If there be laid on him a redemption; then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid upon him.

ceived the indemnification, which was, according to the average price, fixed at thirty shekels (see on ver. 32). Thus we see here also, an exact and just proportion between guilt and punishment.

28. Philo explains: "It was not right to offer such animal as a sacrifice, or to eat it, because no man ought to use as his food any part of a beast which has killed a man." The Rabbins go still farther, and prohibit even the remotest enjoyment or profit of the flesh of such animal.

29. The proprietor of a beast which was known as dangerous, was also to be killed, because, as Josephus observes: "he was the cause of the death of the person who was killed by his ox." The Talmud understands the punishment here as death "by the hand of heaven."

30. But the capital punishment could be redeemed by money. This is, as Ebn Ezra justly observes, not in opposition with the principle enjoined in Numb. xxxv. 31, not to take redemption, for that law treats of insidious murderers, whilst in our case no murder is committed, but homicide, caused by blameable heedlessness. The price was of course fixed by the judges.

31. *Son* and *daughter* are here understood by Targum Onkelos and Jonathan, to refer to *Israelites*, in opposition to the Canaanitish slaves, of whom, as they believe, the following verse treats. But the Hebrew idiom is more favourable to the acceptance of Rashi and others, that those expressions apply to *younger* persons of both sexes, who, as perhaps many might believe, ought to be better guarded by their parents or relatives, and whose accident might be rather ascribed to *their* carelessness than to any fault on the part

of the proprietor of the dangerous animal. *Son* and *daughter* stand, therefore, in opposition to *man* and *woman*, in ver. 29.

32. The free Israelite was usually valued at fifty silver shekels (Levit. xxvii. 3); the slave, according to our passage, at thirty. The normal weight, and, later, the normal coin, was the shekel. Much sagacity and ingenuity have been displayed to discover its weight and its value, and after many unsuccessful attempts, most of the Hebrew antiquaries have returned to the statement of the Rabbins, that a holy shekel is equal in weight to 320 middle barley-grains. There are still some genuine Jewish shekels preserved from the time after the exile, for *before* that period no money was, probably, coined under public authority, although half-shekels, and a fourth part of that coin were known (Exod. xxx. 13; 1 Sam. ix. 8). In the year 173 or 174 of the Seleucidic era, the Syrian government granted to prince Simon the privilege of coining; and he ordered whole, half, and quarter shekels to be struck. The emblems were, a manna- or sacrifice-vessel, and a blooming Aaron's rod or a lily. The inscriptions, in old Hebrew characters, contain the value of the coin, the year, and the name of the prince. These shekels weigh, according to Barthélemy, between 256 and 271½ Parisian grains; and, if we allow some addition for the wear and tear, we may put down the weight of the sacred shekel, with Boeckh, at 274 Parisian grains, which is equivalent to the Eginetic didrachmon; and the Septuagint translates, in fact, shekel with that Greek word, and this is, in silver, about 2s. 7d. But it is generally assumed, after the

31. Whether he hath gored a son, or gored a daughter, according to this judgment shall it be done to him. 32. If the ox gore a man-servant or a maid-servant; he shall give to their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.—33. And if a man openeth a pit, or if a man diggeth a pit, and doth not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein; 34. The owner of the pit shall pay for

Rabbins, that the ordinary shekel in use in earlier periods, was only half of the weight of the sacred shekel, or of the shekel of "royal weight"; although the expressions used in the Old Testament seem, literally, to imply little more than a shekel regulated by royal decree, and, as such, available for sacred purposes (see 2 Kings xii. 5, and Gen. xxiii. 16). Michaelis takes the proportion of both shekels, as 3 to 5. Twenty *gerahs* were one shekel; half a shekel was a *bekah*; 100 shekels made probably a *mina*; and 3,000 made a talent, which is equiva-

lent to 822,000 Parisian grains, so that a talent of silver is equal to about £400 sterling, and a talent of gold to about £4,000 to £6,000. Therefore, the punishment fixed in our verse would be 72s. 6d. if we take here the *sacred* shekel to be meant, which sum will not be deemed inadequate, if we consider that, in ancient times, money had fifteen or twenty times its present value (according to others, even fifty times more). Josephus mentions as the price of a slave 120 drachmas, or 97s. 6d.; it is a matter of course, that, for superior slaves, it was considerably higher.

II. THE RIGHT OF PROPERTY, XXI. 33—XXII. 14.

12. IF IT IS ENDANGERED BY NEGLECT OF OTHERS. VERS. 33, 34.

After the right of *persons* has been treated in all its possible relations, follow the laws about injury done to property, either *indirectly* by carelessness (ver. 33—36), or *directly* by theft or defraudation (ver. 37—xxii. 14).—The first of these laws treats of a case, in which a person is but the very remote occasion of a loss. Namely, if he opens a pit already existing in public places or streets, or digs a new one without covering it, he may become the cause of the death of an animal, which falls into that pit. In this case, he shall pay to the proprietor the value of the animal; but the dead beast belongs to himself. This is undoubtedly a just law, which not only protects those who possess cattle against a frequent source of damage; but which, as Ebn Ezra remarks, is calculated to prevent animals from being sacrificed bootlessly without serving the use and convenience of man.—It is well-known, that the Oriental cisterns are usually covered with a large stone, which is removed, when the flocks of the whole

neighbourhood are watered together: for if they were left open, the water which they contain would soon, by the sand which the wind drives into it, be troubled, if not entirely covered (see Gen. xxix. 2, 3), and Josephus (Antiq. IV. viii. 37), remarks: "Let those who dig a well or a pit, be careful to lay planks over them, and so keep them shut up, not in order to hinder any person from drawing water, but that there may be no danger of falling into them from inadvertency. However, about the case, that a human being falls into such open pit, the legislator has made no provision; for a man may, by some precaution, avoid the danger. That cases of such kind really occurred is evident from several passages (Ps. vii. 16; cxix. 85, etc.). But he ordains that he, who omits to make a battlement around the roof of his house, must accuse himself of guilt of blood, if a misfortune happens; and this offers an analogy, from which we may infer, that if a person fell into an uncovered pit, the author of the accident was deemed guilty, although

it, and give money to their owner, and the dead beast shall be his.—35. And if one man's ox hurteth another's, that he die; then shall they sell the live ox, and divide the money of it; and the dead ox also they shall divide. 36. Or if

the Rabbinical right declares him innocent. But some severity was certainly necessary, if we consider, that many

human lives might be risked by such carelessness.

13. IF ONE MAN'S ANIMAL IS INJURED BY THAT OF ANOTHER. VERS. 35, 36.

From the loss, which a *person* causes to the property of another, the legislator passes to the damage, which is done by one animal to another. If, for instance, an ox kills the ox of another, the former is sold, and the money divided between both proprietors, as is also done with the killed ox. For here is no guilt on either part, but merely an accident. However Rashi observes justly, that this law could be applied in the case only, if both oxen were of nearly the same value; for else it might happen, that the master of the goring animal gained a considerable advantage by the division of the much more valuable ox which was killed; and thus it would encourage rather than check the

carelessness.—But if it was known to the master that the ox was goring, and if he had been warned (see ver. 29, which words the Sept. here add again), he was bound to pay the full value of the dead ox, which, besides, belonged to the *injured* party. This is the Talmudical interpretation of the words: “and the dead shall be his.” The pronoun *his* is ambiguous; but from the severity of the punishment in ver. 29, with reference to an ox known to be goring, we may conclude, that the master must bear a greater loss than merely the payment of the price of the killed ox, for which indemnification the latter would belong to him.

14. LAWS ABOUT THEFT. VER. 37—XXII. 3.

We shall in these ordinances also discover the same legislative wisdom, with which, in all instances, the proportion between offence and punishment has been balanced, and with which everywhere the existing circumstances have been judiciously regarded. The purely moral prohibition is contained in the eighth and tenth commandments, and is repeatedly enjoined (Lev. xix. 11); these verses specify the penal laws. Now it is known, that there are especially two motives inducing to theft: 1. avarice, and 2. in cases of poverty, indolence and aversion to work; for the former case there is no more appropriate punishment than enhanced restitution of the stolen goods; and for the latter, none is more efficient than forced and hard labour. And these are, indeed, the two kinds of punishment, which Moses introduced for theft. He seems, besides, to have started from the point of view, that the thief, who pos-

sesses property, commits the offence from avarice, whilst he, who is destitute of the means of supporting himself, commits it from antipathy to honest activity. From this principle the two chief laws of Moses with regard to theft are self-evident; namely: 1. The thief shall restore the theft doubly, if it is still found untouched in his hands (xxii. 3); and 2. If he is unable to pay the fine, he shall be sold into servitude to a Hebrew master, and serve him till he can pay the fine (ver. 2). By these arrangements the avaricious will be effectually induced to contentment with his own lawful property, whilst the lazy will be prompted to legitimate and spontaneous activity. But the Mosaic code establishes further the following appropriate gradation: 3. If the thief has, before his detection, applied the theft to his own uses; for instance, if he has killed stolen cattle, a still more increased fine is imposed upon him,

it be known that the ox was wont to push in time past, and his owner hath not kept him in; he shall surely pay ox for ox; and the dead shall be his own.—37. If a man stealeth an ox, or a sheep, and killeth it, or selleth it; he

because he has manifestly proved, that he did not, impelled perhaps by his better conscience, intend voluntarily to return the theft; and therefore he is obliged to pay, instead of one ox, five, and instead of one lamb, four. As the ox is of such paramount importance to an agricultural people, who use horses but seldom for rural purposes, it was necessary to protect the proprietors the more efficiently against such thefts, which might cause the entire ruin of their households, and therefore the stealing of a lamb was only fined with the fourfold value, since the proprietor simply loses the animal, but not any working-power. Too indistinct, and without a well-defined principle, is the provision of the Roman law: "Those who steal a pig, or a goat, or a lamb, are not to be punished with the same severity as those who steal greater beasts."

4. If the thief breaks into the house at night, it is lawful to resist him, if necessary, with force; and if the master of the house unfortunately kills him in the encounter, he is free from guilt of blood, since the lawless delinquent executed his criminal design at a time, when it was impossible to call in the aid of the authorities against his violence. This reason the master can no longer plead, if the house-breaking is committed by day; in this case that resistance which causes the death of the thief, is guilt of blood, for the proprietor might have been able to obtain assistance from the officers of justice. Besides, it cannot be discerned in the night, whether the offender intends only to commit theft, and not murder also, and therefore it was necessary, to permit self-defence even on the risk of a deadly conflict (see on xxii. 2). The Koran (v. 42) prescribes about the same offence: "Cut off the hands of a thief, to punish him for the crime he has committed. This warning punishment is from God;

for He is omnipotent and all-wise."—The Solonic law, quoted by Demosthenes, ordains: "If a thief steal in the night, it is lawful to persecute, and thus to kill or to wound him." The Roman law of the Twelve Tables permits also to kill a nightly thief, "if this is only testified by loud cries;" and analogous provisions contains the old German legislation.—The English law defines burglary similarly to the Hebrew code: "To constitute the crime the act must be committed in the night, or when there is not daylight enough to discern a man's face."—About kidnapping see on xxi. 16.—About defraudation of entrusted or found property, see on xxiii. 4.

37. Our text treats of theft of cattle, not only on account of its frequency among nomadic and agricultural tribes, but also on account of its most ruinous character; and, therefore, almost all ancient legislations contain very careful and detailed clauses against that crime, nor have modern codes of law overlooked this subject. Justinus (ii. 8) observes, with respect to the Scythians: "No crime is considered more punishable among them than theft; for as they have their herds and flocks in their forests without any guard or protection, what would be safe if it were allowed to steal?" The fourfold restoration of stolen sheep is also mentioned in 2 Sam. xii. 6; but the exclamation (Ibid. ver. 5): "The man who committed the crime is a man of death"! does not permit us to suppose, that the king had in certain cases the right, to enhance the punishment for theft according to his individual will. That expression is merely an outburst of indignation against the moral corruption of the offender, which, however, cannot influence the strict and literal enforcement of the penal laws. Nor are we justified to conclude with Michaelis, from Prov. vi. 30, 31,

shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.

that in Solomon's time a sevenfold instead of a fivefold restoration for cattle was introduced. The expression "seven times" is often used in the Bible indefinitely as a round number (see note on xxiii. 10, 12). Although our law speaks only of animals, it cannot be doubted, that the same provisions are equally applicable to all other movables. Josephus (Antiq. IV. viii. 27), says with regard to

a theft, which is found complete in the hands of the thief (xxii. 3): "he that has purloined *gold* and *silver*, let him pay double." Hence follows, that if the property was already sold, or in any other way applied by the thief, a fourfold or fivefold restoration was his punishment. But the fines for stolen *cattle* were, perhaps, generally more rigorous from the reasons above alluded to.

CHAPTER XXII.

IF ¹the thief be found breaking in, and be smitten that he die, ²*there is no guilt of blood upon him.*
2. If the sun shone upon him, *there is guilt of blood upon him*; he shall make full restitution; if he have

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—A thief.

² *There shall no blood be shed for him.*

1. "We must consider," remarks Rosenmüller, "the facility of breaking through walls in the Orient, for the houses seem in ancient times, as is the case at present, to have consisted of clay laid between transverse beams. Compare Job iv. 19. Of the houses of the Persians this is fully confirmed by Chardin (Voy. iv. p. 110, Ed. Langles.)."—He, who has killed the thief, is not considered guilty of murder; he bears, *morally*, no guilt of blood; much less is it admissible to avenge the blood of the thief.

2. Jewish tradition understands the words: "If the sun shone upon him," to mean: If it is clear to you like the sun; namely, that the thief intended only to steal, not to murder also. But nearer to the sense translates Onkelos: "if eyes of witnesses fall upon it," that is, if the house-breaking was attempted by day; or, as Rashi explains, in the absence of the master of the house, whilst strangers happened to see and seize the offender. Compare Gen. xxxii. 32; Judges ix. 33; 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. About the reason of the difference between diurnal and nocturnal theft, see *supra*.—*He shall make full restitution*, namely, five oxen instead of one, and

four sheep instead of one sheep.—*Then he shall be sold for his theft.* The Rabbins, urging the last word, interpret, that he shall only be sold for the *theft*, not for its multiplied restitution, and that the value of the theft must amount to more than the price of the slave. However this may be, he could only be sold for a period not exceeding six years, and only to a *Hebrew* master; and Josephus (Antiq. XVI. i. 1) writes thus on a contrary measure of Herod: "He enacted a law, no way like our original laws, and which he enacted himself, to expose housebreakers to be ejected out of his kingdom, which punishment was not only grievous to be borne by the offenders, but contained in it a dissolution of the customs of our forefathers; for this slavery to foreigners and such as did not live after the manner of Jews . . . was an offence against our religious settlement, rather than a punishment of the offenders . . . This law seemed to be a piece of insolence of Herod, when he did not act as a king but as a tyrant." After six years, the Israelitish servant must be released, which could not be guaranteed if he was sold to a foreign master.

nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. 3. If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double.—4. If a man causeth a field or vineyard to be depastured, and driveth in his beast, ¹so that it feedeth in another man's field; the best of his field, and the best of his vineyard, shall he

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And shall feed.

3. Ebn Ezra remarks: "This verse comprises all kinds of cattle; and tradition understood the law of fourfold and fivefold restitution to refer to a stolen lamb or ox only." However, the difference between this verse and xxi. 37, is, rather, that here the theft is supposed still to be in the hands of the thief, but there already sold to others. The *double* restitution was also legally enacted in all other cases of stolen property.

Increased restitution was the punishment of theft in the old Greek legislation, and according to the Roman Twelve Tables, and is still customary among the Arabs. But in general the Roman law offers the following points of comparison: The punishment for *manifest theft* by the law of the Twelve Tables was capital; a freeman who had committed theft was flogged and consigned to the injured person. Later, the penalty was changed into fourfold restitution, both in the case of a slave and a freedman. Here we see only that difference from the Mosaic law, that the latter did not vacillate, nor experimentally fix the unreasonable and disproportionate penalty of death for the offence of theft, but at once, with safe

and sound firmness, introduced increased restitution. If the theft was not manifest, that is, if the thief was not caught whilst he was engaged in carrying the stolen thing away to another place, the penalty was twofold restitution. The similar mitigation of the Mosaic code (ver. 3), is certainly more rational, since it is all but indifferent whether the theft is found in the hands of the thief on his way home, or in the house itself. A nightly thief might be killed if caught in the act, and he might also be killed in the daytime if he was caught in the act and defended himself with any kind of weapon. The first case coincides perfectly with the words of the Mosaic law (ver. 1), whilst the second is at least not against its spirit, as, in all cases when it could fairly be supposed that murder and plunder were equally intended, self-defence, without regard to the consequences, was permitted. But an invidious distinction is again made in the Roman law with regard to the penalty of slaves: they were whipped and thrown down a precipice, a law which is utterly at variance with the genius of Mosaism.

15. ABOUT DEPASTURING FOREIGN FIELDS OR VINEYARDS. VER. 4.

If a person lets his cattle graze on the field of another, he must restore the damage from the best part of his own fields. Although the legislator (Deut. xxiii. 24, 25) permits the wanderer to eat grapes of a vineyard, and ears of a corn-field after his heart's desire, with that limitation only, in the first case, not to gather grapes in a vessel, in the other not to cut the ears with a sickle, because thus evidently more would be taken from the

property of others than is necessary for the momentary satisfaction of his hunger or the gratification of his appetite; yet, pasturing cattle on foreign fields is too obvious and too injurious an encroachment upon the property of others, especially among a people the whole legislation of which aimed at the promotion of agriculture, to encourage or to permit it in the remotest manner, and it was, therefore, necessary to deter the pro-

restore.—5. If fire breaketh out, and catcheth thorns, so that the sheaves of corn, or the standing corn, or the field be consumed thereby, he ¹who caused the conflagration shall surely make restitution.—6. If a man delivereth to his neighbour money or vessels to keep, and it is stolen out of the man's house; if the thief be found, let him pay double. 7. If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the judges, ²to swear that he

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Kindled the fire.

² To see whether he have not, etc.

prietors of cattle from such infringements by an adequate penalty. The Samaritan codex, and the Septuagint, which here literally follows the former, express that punishment thus: "he shall pay from his field according to its produce; and if his cattle has depastured all the field of another, he shall pay the best of his field, and the best of his vineyard;" and the Vulgate renders the last words of our text thus: "whatever he has best in his field or his vineyard he shall restore according to the valuation of the loss." It is self-understood, that the compensation was always proportionate to the damage.

It seems further obvious, that the pronouns in "his field" and "his vineyard" refer to the master of the cattle, although some interpreters apply them to the master of the field. The second part of the verse, from "and driveth," is the explanation and illustration of the preceding words: if a man *drives* his cattle himself to the field or the vineyard of another, then he forfeits the penalty of the law; from which seems to follow, that if the cattle goes on a foreign field accidentally, and without their proprietor being aware of it, the latter is guiltless.

16. ABOUT DAMAGES CAUSED BY FIRE ON FIELDS. VER. 5.

It is customary in the East, before the beginning of the rainy season in July and August, to set fire to the herbage which was left on the fields; and especially to the thorns and weeds; by which process the fertility of the soil for the following year is materially enhanced. But as in that time the fields are extremely dry and parched by the exceeding and continuous heat of the past summer months, it requires the utmost circumspection and care to keep the flame in due bounds, which, if the direction of the wind and the quality of the soil are not attentively studied and regarded, would spread in devastating fury, and irresistibly carry

desolation to all surrounding fields. Travellers relate fearful instances of such calamities; and it was therefore the imperious duty of the legislator to prevent such catastrophes by an energetic law, and to punish even carelessness with the same rigour as malignity; and in consideration of the great importance of this subject, the Talmud has given very minute precepts how to deal with fire on fields. The same practice obtained among the Italian farmers, as Virgil mentions (*Georg.* i. 84, 85): "Often, too, it has been of use to set fire to barren lands, and burn the light stubble in crackling flames."

17. ABOUT PROPERTY COMMITTED FOR SAFE-KEEPING. VERS. 6—12.

In the following verses, the laws concerning the safe-keeping of the property of another are specified; and in this respect the distinction is established and adhered to, that if inanimate objects were,

by cunning or violence, wrested from the depositary, he was not bound to make restitution to the proprietor; but, if animals, as oxen, asses, or sheep, were intrusted to his care, he was responsible

hath not put his hand to his neighbour's goods. 8. For all manner of trespass, *whether it be* for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, *or* for anything lost, 'of which it is said that it is his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; *and* whom the judges will condemn, he shall pay double to his neighbour. 9. If a man delivereth to his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast, to keep; and it dieth, or is hurt, or taken away, no man

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Which *another* challengeth to be his.

for theft (ver. 11), but not for such accidents as the death of an animal, or its abduction by robbers or laceration by a wild beast. But if it is found that he had in any way intended to act fraudulently to the proprietor, he was compelled to restore to him the two-fold value of the deposit. All these disputes were decided by the competent judge, by means of adjuration. This is the clear connection of our verses; and the laws which they contain bear likewise the character of prudence and justice. But the traditional Jewish exegesis finds, besides, in these clauses, the distinction, that vers. 6—8 treat of a gratuitous guardian, whilst vers. 9—12 speak of a paid depositary. For the inanimate objects mentioned in vers. 6—8 require no particular attention on the part of the trustee, who can therefore, not well claim remuneration, whilst the guarding of animals is inseparable from trouble and anxieties, and, therefore, deserves some compensation. Nor was the depositary bound to make restitution in the latter case, if animals under his care were violently seized by wild beasts, or abducted in any other manner, which it was not in his power to repel or subdue. This Rabbinical distinction, although not mentioned in our text, seems to be perfectly logical, and stands in full harmony with the spirit of these laws.

6. If the inanimate property has been stolen from the house of the depositary, the *thief*, if discovered and seized, must pay its twofold value to the proprietor.

7. If the thief is not found out, the

trustee must come before the judge and *swear* that he has not embezzled the property. Josephus (*Antiq. IV. viii. 38*), treating of this law, lets the depositary go "before the seven judges," as was customary in his time.

8. *For all manner of trespass*, that is, in all cases when a person has embezzled property committed to his care, but pretends that it has been destroyed or robbed, in spite of his faithful vigilance. —*Of which it is said that it is this*, or, if property has been lost and recovered, and if the proprietor or a trustworthy witness say, that those are the authentic objects, then the dispute shall be brought before the judges. These concise words have been very differently interpreted. The Vulgate and Luther omit those words entirely. In the English Version: "which *another* challengeth to be his," the word *another* is arbitrarily added.—*Whom the judges will condemn, he shall pay double to his neighbour*, that is, either the depositary for the intended fraud, or the witness for his false evidence, or the depositor for the false charge brought against his neighbour.

9. If the entrusted animal perishes by accident, death, or fracture, or is violently abducted by robbers, *without witness*, then,

10. The depositary shall swear, that his statement is truthful; the proprietor is bound to accept this oath, and the former makes no restitution. The former was, in such cases, fully exempted from all responsibility, for it was not in his power to prevent the loss.

seeing it: 10. *Then* shall an oath of the Lord be between them both, that he hath not put his hand to his neighbour's goods, and the owner of it shall accept *thereof*, and he shall not make restitution: 11. And if it be stolen from him, he shall make restitution to the owner thereof. 12. If it be torn in pieces, *then* let him bring it *for* wit-

Some commentators believe, that, in such instances, the proprietor pays no wages to the keeper; for, according to their opinion, our text speaks of a paid keeper, see *supra*. But, if this were the case, it would be difficult to find any body willing to tend the flocks of another, as he is made responsible for accidents beyond the control of man.

11. But if an animal is *stolen* from the depositary, he must restore it, as it may fairly be supposed that he was deficient in the necessary care and vigilance, under which condition alone he received his wages.

12. If the animal has been entirely torn by a wild beast, the guardian shall, as a proof of his innocence, bring a part or member of it with him.—As an illustration of our verse according to the first in-

terpretation, we quote the following passage from the laws of the Gentoos: "If the shepherd has led his cattle to a distant pasture, and an animal dies from any disease, in spite of all possible care on the part of the shepherd, he must bring to the proprietor the head, the tail, the fore-foot, or any other part of the body, as a convincing proof of the truth of his statement; in such case, he is freed from all responsibility; but if he neglects that precaution, he must restitute the loss" (see *Rosenm.*, *Ofient.* i. p. 148).—Faithful to the principle, that the keeper is only answerable, if it was in his power to avert the accident, the Talmud observes: "animals killed by a fox or marten must be paid for; animals torn by a wolf, a lion, a bear, or serpent, need not be restored."

18. ABOUT PROPERTY BORROWED FROM ANOTHER. VERS. 13, 14.

In systematical order, the case is now treated, that a person has lent to another either an animal or a thing. If the proprietor received no hire for it, and the animal died, or the object was destroyed in the absence of the master, the borrower must restore the loss: for the guarding of the borrowed thing devolved upon him; but if the master was present, the borrower was not bound to pay for the loss, since the former might have protected his property, and would no doubt have done so, if it had been practicable. But if the master received hire for the borrowed animal or thing, the borrower had, in case of any accident, no further obligations; "it comes for his hire;" for the master, who derives profit from his property, must also be prepared for a damage, whilst that property is used by others. It is self-understood, that this last provision is applicable only if the borrower

is not guilty of any deceitful or malicious intention.

13. The master might, for instance, as Ebn Ezra observes, plead against the borrower, that he imposed too heavy burdens upon the animal.

14. If the ox is not borrowed, but hired, the borrower receives no particular favour from the proprietor, since he pays for the use of the animal; and he is therefore not responsible for accidents like those who are permitted its gratuitous use. Whether in cases when such hired animal was stolen, the borrower was obliged to restore it or not, is not mentioned in our text; but the question has been treated in the Talmud (*Bab. Mez.* 94), and has been differently answered: according to Rabbi Meir, the borrower is like a gratuitous keeper, and is therefore *not* responsible; but in Rabbi Jehudah's opinion, he is like a paid guar-

ness, *and* he shall not pay for that which is torn.—13. And if a man borroweth *ought* of his neighbour, and it is hurt, or die, the owner thereof *being* not with it, he shall surely pay *for it*. 14. *But* if the owner thereof *be* with it, he shall not pay for *it*: if it *be* a hired *thing*, it came for its hire.—15. And if a man enticeth a maid who is not

dian, and must therefore pay for the loss. Considering the wording of ver. 11, Rabbi Jehudah's interpretation seems to

be more corresponding with the opinion of the legislator.

III. GENERAL MORAL LAWS. XXII. 15. to XXIII. 19.

19. ABOUT UNCHASTITY. VERS. 15, 16.

The extraordinary purity and the divinely moral character of the Mosaic legislation appears in no class of laws more strongly and clearly, than in those about violation of chastity (compare the seventh commandment, xx. 13). Here the legislator seems to disavow every clemency, and with inexorable severity to aim at the purest integrity of morals.

1. If a person seduces a *not betrothed* free virgin by persuasion or violence, he must pay the customary marriage-price (*Mohar*, see *infra*) as imposed by her father, and take her to wife; nor is he allowed during his whole life to divorce her. But if the father refuses him as his son-in-law, he must pay the usual fine for disgracing the virgin, which was, according to Deut. xxii. 28, 29, fifty shekels of silver.

2. If she was betrothed or married to another man, and was *persuaded* to the criminal conduct, both were publicly stoned to death, "that the evil might be extirpated from among Israel." A virgin legally betrothed was considered a lawful wife; and could therefore not be separated from her intended husband without a bill of divorce.

3. If the seduction of a betrothed virgin, or of another's wife, was effected with *violence*, the man only suffered death. But violence was supposed in open fields, where the maiden or wife might have cried for help, without her voice reaching to inhabited places; so that she was in the predicament of one attacked by robbers,

whilst, if the crime was committed in a town, such excuse cannot be pleaded.

4. If the seduced female was a servant, the man was chastised, he had to bring a guilt-offering, and the priest must pray for expiation of his sin (Levit. xix. 20—22).

5. If a man accuses his newly-married wife of unchastity, the charge is investigated by the judges in the presence of her parents; if she is found innocent, the man must pay to her parents a hundred shekels for his calumny, and is never permitted to divorce her; but if she is found guilty: "then they shall bring out the female to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die; because she hath wrought impiousness in Israel, to be unchaste in her father's house: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel" (Deut. xxii. 13—21). About the impressive and imposing ceremonies in cases of suspected faithlessness of a wife, see Numb. v. 11—31, ceremonies which, undoubtedly, were a most efficient preventive of adultery.

It is easy to discover the leading principles of these laws: 1st. To shield virgins from permanent ignominy and disgrace in consequence of a momentary crime, by converting illicit intercourse into the lawful and sacred tie of matrimony: 2nd. To deter virgins and young men from unchastity; since the former could, without danger of death, marry no man except their seducers, after having

betrothed, and lieth with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. 16. If her father utterly refuse to give her

once lost their innocence; and the latter were compelled to wed the disgraced females, at the same time losing the liberty ever to dismiss them: and, 3rd. To admonish betrothed or married women of their conjugal duties in the most impressive manner, and thus to protect the sanctity of matrimony from profanation by the most rigorous penalties; and even punishment of death can, from these exalted points of view, not appear exaggerated. Need we add, what excellent fruits these wise and most moral laws have produced in the Israelitish nation? since chastity and sacred reverence for the matrimonial duties are virtues which, since the real observance of the Mosaic law, have always flourished amongst them in a remarkable degree; and nowhere does the utter inability of Tacitus to comprehend the spirit of the Hebrew laws appear in a more striking manner than in his unguarded calumny with respect to the precepts under discussion: "The Hebrews are a nation of unbridled lust, and although they admit no intercourse with women from other nations, nothing is unlawful among themselves." So much do national prejudice and religious fanaticism blind the judgment of even great and comprehensive minds. As a contrast to that remark of Tacitus, we call attention to the dictum of Bishop Gregoire: "that a striking resemblance of children to their parents, is oftener met with amongst Jews than amongst other nations" (Sic!).

The Koran (iv. 19) provides: "If your wives commit adultery, and four witnesses from among you testify this, imprison her in your house till death releases her or God shows her another way of deliverance." Further (xxiv. 4, *et seq.*): "But as to those who accuse women of reputation (of fornication or adultery), and cannot produce four witnesses, scourge them with eighty stripes, and receive not their testimony for ever, for such are infamous prevaricators; ex-

cepting those who shall afterwards repent." It is obvious, that both the difficulty of obtaining four eye-witnesses for the crime of adultery, and the severity of punishment in case of mistake on the part of the accuser, must almost render it impossible to call, in any instance, faithless wives to account. However, the spirit of those clauses is evidently in accordance with the Mosaic laws.—A few comparisons from the Greek and Roman laws may be acceptable. Among the Athenians, if a man caught another man in the act of criminal intercourse with his wife, he might kill him with impunity. There was no adultery unless a married woman was concerned; but it was no adultery for a man to have connection with a married woman who prostituted herself, or who was engaged in selling anything in public places. The husband might, if he pleased, take a sum of money from the adulterer, by way of compensation, and detain him till he found sureties for the payment. If the act of adultery was proved, the husband could no longer cohabit with his wife, under pain of losing his privileges as a citizen. The adulteress was excluded from all temples.—In the Roman law there was no adultery unless the female was married; the commerce with a widow or a virgin was fornication. By the old law or custom, if the adulterer was caught in the fact, he was at the mercy of the injured husband, who might also punish with death his adulterous wife. Originally, the act of adultery might be punished by any person, as being a public offence. In the time of Augustus, the *Lex Julia* was enacted (B.C. 17). By this law, if a husband kept his wife after an act of adultery was known to him, and let the adulterer free, he was guilty of the offence of bawdry. A woman, convicted of adultery, was mulcted in half her dowry, and the third part of her property and banished to some miserable island, such as Seriphos, for instance. The adulterer was mulcted in

to him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins.—17. A witch thou shalt not suffer to live.—

half his property, and banished in like manner, but not to the same island as the woman. The adulterer and adulteress were subjected also to civil incapacities; but this law did not inflict the punishment of death on either party. But, by a constitution of Constantine, the offence in the adulterer was made capital. By the legislation of Justinian the adulteress was put into a convent, after being first whipped. If her husband did not take her out in two years, she was compelled to assume the habit, and to spend the rest of her life in the convent. The Julian law permitted the father to kill the adulterer and adulteress in certain cases. The husband might kill persons of a certain class, described in the law, whom he caught in the act of adultery with his wife; but he could not kill his wife. If the wife was divorced for adultery, the husband was entitled to retain part of the dowry. The attentive reader will easily discover the differences between these gradually introduced, unconnected laws, and the systematic provisions of the Mosaic code. According to the Egyptian law, a woman who had committed adultery was sentenced to lose her nose (!), and the man was condemned to receive a bastinado of one thousand blows (!). If the latter had used force against a free woman, the punishment was still more barbarous.

15. *He shall surely endow her to be his wife.* The manner in which matrimonial alliances are concluded in the East, is too well known to require any comment; and the following extract from *Arvieux's Manners of the Bedouin Arabs* (p. 119), will suffice for the illustration of this verse: "If a young man finds a girl to his taste, he requests her father, through one of his relatives, to permit his marriage with her. Now they

negociate how many camels, sheep or horses the son-in-law is to give to the father for his daughter..... A man who marries, must, therefore, literally buy his wife; and the parents who have the greatest number of daughters are the richest. They are the chief wealth of a family..... The qualities of the girl and of the family, and the circumstances of the suitor, are especially considered in the matter." The judicial marriage-price (*Mohar*) seems in general to have been fifty shekels. Since thus the daughters form the most valuable *property* of the parents, this law is here inserted immediately after the violation of property; compare the sacred narratives concerning Jacob and Laban; Shechem and Dinah; David and Michal. However, according to Mosaism, the Mohar was not a price of purchase, for not the father, but the bride received it to enable her to enter with proper dignity into the house of her future husband. Besides the Mohar, the latter generally gave presents to the parents (Gen. xxxiv. 12, xxiv. 53), in order to gain their favour, and to show them respect and affection. The father could sometimes dispense with the Mohar (Josh. xv. 16; 1 Sam. xviii. 25); and, in some instances, he even gave his daughter a rich dowry (Josh. xv. 19; Judg. i. 15). Thus we see even common Oriental customs ennobled in the Old Testament, in harmony with the more dignified position of the women among the Israelites. And thus the later Jewish tradition has stipulated the Mohar more in favour of the wife than of her parents, as, at the death of her husband, or in the case of divorce, she received a certain sum (a virgin two hundred Sus, a widow one hundred).

20. LAW AGAINST WITCHCRAFT. VER. 17.

A witch thou shalt not suffer to live. As the magical art implies the

imposition, that those who practise it are inspired and supported by certain

18. Whoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death.—19. He who sacrificeth to *any* god, save to the

demons and deities, it is, in fact, a negation of the unity of God, and, as a hidden polytheism, deserves, quite logically after the theoretical principles of Mosaism, punishment of death (see note to xx. 2, 3; *infra*, ver. 19). Hereto must be added, that the sorcerers, by their fraudulent arts, easily prey upon the credulity of the people and enrich themselves by illegitimate means, even irrespective of the evil, that the notions of the multitude are thereby necessarily disturbed and led astray from faith into superstition. Thus the material and spiritual damage caused by sorcery was sufficiently momentous to justify even capital punishment; for it is “an abomination to the Lord, for which He expelled the heathens before the Israelites” (Deut. xviii. 10—12); and the legislator solemnly called down upon the head of those who give themselves up to such pernicious arts their own blood, if, in consequence of their aberrations, they suffer the death of lapidation (Lev. xix. 31; xx. 6).—This severity is further accountable by the great prevalence of this evil in the East; in Egypt and Babylon, the sorcerers or magicians belonged to the caste of the priests (Exod. vii. 11; Dan. ii. 2); and, among the Israelites, kings even were addicted to such practices (2 Kings xvii. 17; Isa. ii. 6; Mich. v. 11). But, according to the Mosaic notions, it is absolutely impossible to acknowledge sorcerers or witches, and those who pretend to be such must be considered as impious and nefarious impostors. Even the idea of a Satan, as an evil principle, is foreign to Mosaism, and has only been borrowed in later periods from the Babylonian mythology. How much fanaticism, madness, and bloodshed, might have been avoided, if these simple and pure ideas of Mosaism had always been kept in view! The history of the Christian church would not have been disgraced by the fatal absurdities of witch-trials.

“The seventeenth verse of the twenty-second chapter of Exodus,” observes a recent commentator, “was the war-cry of the clergy against myriads of aged and defenceless women.... So late as 1716, a woman and her daughter of nine years old were hanged at Huntingdon for raising storms by witchcraft. These deplorable statutes were not repealed till 1736... In Germany, not less than one hundred thousand women and children are said to have suffered a cruel death under the stupid and ferocious persecution of witches that disgraced the sixteenth century.... A sound lawyer like Sir Matthew Hale, and an enlightened scholar like Sir Thomas Brown, were both drawn into the same vortex of folly and cruelty.”

The sorcerers were, therefore, capitally punished by Moses only because they wished, as impostors, to make the people believe in their futile arts, but not because he himself ascribed to them any power or any connection with idols; for if so, he would tacitly have admitted their existence, and a certain degree of influence, which, however, he everywhere most emphatically denies; and the very names and designations of the idols describe them as illusions and unreal phantoms.—About the different kinds of sorcery in use among the idolatrous neighbours of the Israelites we shall speak in their proper places.—Witchcraft, whether practised by men or women, was, of course, equally criminal (Lev. xx. 27), but, in the opinion of the Talmud, Maimonides, and others, women are more given to such arts than men; and, lest ill-placed clemency towards the weaker sex destroy the efficiency of this law, the feminine form is here used, in Hebrew, in preference to the masculine. Sorcery was, in the Athenian law, also punished with death, whilst the Romans originally considered it criminal only if it had injured the interests of others.

Lord only, he shall be extirpated.—20. And the stranger thou shalt neither vex, nor oppress him: for you were

21. AGAINST COITION WITH BEASTS. VER. 18.

The law about pagan witchcraft leads the legislator to the interdiction of unnatural lasciviousness or coition with beasts; which abomination prevailed also among many Oriental nations, even before the times of Moses, so extensively, that it formed, in some districts of Egypt, for instance, the Mendesian, a part of their idolatrous rites. Of all the aberrations and monstrosities to which the physical and moral nature of man may degenerate, this is the most hideous and heinous, and the morals of a state must indeed be rotten to the very core, where such an abomination is permitted. Death of the man and death of the beast is, therefore, the just punishment of this crime; and the legislator, impelled by a just horror against such atrocities, addresses a most emphatic and solemn warning to the nation, to refrain from that vice, in which admonition he represents even the earth as sympathetic

against its hideousness: "And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.... That the land vomit not you out also, when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. For whosoever will commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people" (Lev. xviii. 25—29). In this passage (ver. 22) another kind of unnatural lust is forbidden under penalty of death, carnal intercourse between men; which crime indicated already, in Sodom and Gomorrah, the highest degree of immorality (Gen. xix. 5); and which leads certainly, by the dissolution of the matrimonial ties, not less fatally to the inevitable ruin of a community; of which fact the Roman empire under the Cæsars, offers the most obvious and most melancholy instance.

22. REPETITION OF THE LAW AGAINST POLYTHEISM. VERS. 19.

It has been demonstrated above (on xx. 2, 3), that the belief in the One God of Israel, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, who has led the people out of Egypt, is the innermost centre of Mosaism; that God is the invisible sovereign of the land; and that idol-worship would be rebellion against the acknowledged Lord of the nation; and hence it follows logically, that such crime must be punished capitally, as it would bring the theocratical state into disorganization and decay: it is not only a religious, but also a political crime; it is high treason against state and church. From the same principle an idolatrous town was to be entirely

destroyed (Deut. xiii. 14, *et seq.*); and blasphemy, desecration of the Sabbath, sooth-saying and sorcery were to be punished with death (see note on xix. 6). —*He who sacrificeth to any God.* "As the offering of sacrifices was the chief part of divine service, all the other branches of unlawful worship were contained therein" (*Rosenmüller*). —*Save to the Lord only.* The Jewish expositors find in these words the prohibition, not to sacrifice, and in any way to give adoration to angels or other similar beings; but only and exclusively to God, the Creator of the Universe.

23. LAWS CONCERNING THE POOR, THE STRANGERS, WIDOWS AND ORPHANS, VERS. 20—23, AND XXIII. 9.

The thread of the penal and civil laws is interrupted by a series of statutes, which appeal only to the heart and to humanity, with regard to which no penalty is fixed, and which spread a

magic charm of feeling and sentiment over a code, which usually contains little more than the abstract and dry right of criminal cases. Moses will not only educate *citizens*, he will also train *men*,

strangers in the land of Egypt. 21. You shall not afflict any widow or orphan. 22. If thou afflict them in

and whilst forming the morals of the latter, he prepares them, in a safe although indirect way, for the fulfilment of their obligations as citizens. Political and moral education have by Moses been concentrated into one focus; and by basing patriotism upon virtue, he promotes the prosperity of the state, whilst he seems only intent upon advancing the rectitude of the individuals. Thus Moses has solved in his laws a problem, which has baffled the wisdom of all later legislators, and which is still one of the most perplexing questions of our civil government; namely, how indigence and vagrancy might be obviated. The Mosaic law knows no *beggars*; neither in the Pentateuch, nor in any other book of the Old Testament, is the word mentioned, and only in Ps. cix. 10, it is alluded to as an extraordinary curse of God. In the New Testament they are sometimes mentioned (St. Mark x. 46; St. Luke xviii. 35, etc.); but then they are blind or lame men, or other invalids, who sit in the neighbourhood of the temple, or before the doors of the wealthy. Beggary can, in fact, only prevail in a much more advanced or artificial state of social order, when the property of the individuals is very unequal, and the very poor deem it the duty of the very rich to maintain them from their superfluity without their own exertions. But in the Mosaic state the landed property was distributed among all the Israelites in equal portions, which remained to every individual as an inalienable right; whence it follows, that there could neither be a class of men helplessly poor, nor a privileged opulent nobility, which might become dangerous to liberty and equality; there were no "*latifundia*," which according to the testimony of Pliny (xviii. 7) have ruined Italy and the provinces.

But yet an Israelitish citizen might, with or without his fault, fall into poverty, by bad crops, or indolence, or prodigality; and the legislator has fore-

seen the possibility of such cases so clearly, that he exclaims with emphasis: "The needy shall not cease from amidst the land" (Deut. xv. 11). For such emergencies two ways were left open: Either the poor man could sell himself to an Israelite as a slave, which, according to the notions of the people, was in no way a degrading or a miserable lot, since, as we have shown (on xxi. 1—11), not only the greatest clemency was enjoined towards him as a brother and fellow-citizen, but he went out after a service of six years, and in the epoch of the jubilee received back his old paternal fields, and thus was restored into all the rights and privileges of a free citizen. So far the removal of the difficulty lay in the hands of the poor themselves; and this expedient must especially have been salutary in such cases, when his poverty was a consequence of indolence; for by entering the house of a master as a servant, he was not only a warning example to others similarly disposed, but he was almost compelled to accustom himself to habits of activity and industry. But there are innumerable cases, when the poor might, by a timely loan, maintain his independent position and recover his former prosperity. An unexpected, extraordinary misfortune might reduce to a temporary embarrassment an honest and respected man who would feel an excruciating humiliation in serving as a slave. And in such contingencies the wise and humane legislator makes it an imperative duty of the rich, to lend him a sum of money sufficient to free him from his perplexity, and with such emphasis does he enjoin that command, that some antiquaries have, though unjustly, attributed to it the character of a civil law, rather to be enforced by the authorities, than that of a moral precept: "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden

any way, 'indeed, if they cry to me, I will surely hear

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And they cry at all unto me.

thy heart, nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother. But thou shalt open thy hand wide to him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release is at hand [for in the Sabbath-year debts could not be exacted]; and thy eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry to the Lord against thee, and it be sin to thee" (Deut. xv. 7—11). And in another passage further very sympathetic and feeling precepts are given with respect to such loans: "When thou lendest thy brother anything, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge. Thou shalt stand abroad, and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring out the pledge abroad to thee. And if the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge. In any case thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, and bless thee"; but in order clearly to stamp these laws with a purely moral character, the legislator concludes: "and it shall be righteousness to thee before the Lord thy God" (Deut. xxiv. 10—13).—Thus judicious loans are in the Mosaic code justly preferred to mere alms, and if the Rabbinical law appears in one respect in a more favourable light than in another, it is especially in the further development of the Mosaic laws concerning charity, which everywhere exhibit a beautiful, harmonious blending of sentiment and reason. Even Tacitus, who contorts almost all the other institutions of the Israelites, awards to the latter at least the praise of unshaken brotherly love and ready charity (Hist. v. 5). Already, in the time of king Ahab, compassion and charity were, among the heathen nations, acknowledged as a distinguishing characteristic of the Israelites; for the Syrians say to their monarch after a lost battle: "Behold now, we have heard that the kings

of the house of Israel are merciful kings" (1 Kings xx. 31); and the Talmud proposes the general remark: "He who has no pity does not belong to the descendants of Abraham."

As the *strangers, the widows, and orphans* generally, are in the same helpless condition as the poor, they are expressly included in the same laws of benevolence and consideration. We pass by the merely ethical admonitions of pity and charity towards these unfortunate classes of the population; admonitions, which appeal to the feelings with the most affecting ardour, and repeatedly enjoined as they are, are almost in themselves sufficient to secure for the oppressed the sympathy and assistance of the wealthy. But Moses did not content himself with vague exhortations; although he thought highly of the excellence of human nature, he yet did not wish to leave the fate of the unfortunate to the fluctuations of humours and chances; and therefore he gave positive laws in their favour, and secured to them a regular and certain competence; charity was withdrawn from the doubtful personal pleasure of the rich, and was by legal precepts placed upon a solid basis; it was raised into a *civil* duty; it could no more degrade and humiliate the poor, since it was regulated by the law; and poverty lost its bitterest sting, as the poor could allay its miseries by lawful and valid claims. For Moses ordained:—

1. The spontaneous produce of the fields, the orchards, and the vineyards, in every seventh year, when they were not cultivated, belonged to the poor as well as to the proprietors (Exod. xxiii. 4). 2. In every harvest, the borders of the fields were to be reserved and left to the poor and the stranger; according to tradition, these borders must, at least, be the sixtieth part of the field; and this law applied to all sorts of corn, legumes, the vine, olive-, nut-, and date trees, etc. No poor could

their cry; 23. And my wrath shall be kindled, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall be

be refused, and none was to be favoured in this privilege (see Lev. xix. 9). 3. The proprietor was not allowed to glean the vineyard after the gathering (Deut. xxiv. 21), nor take up the grapes which fell off; all this also belonged to the poor and the stranger (Lev. xix. 10). 4. "When thou cuttest down thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgotten a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hands" (Deut. xxiv. 19). 5. "When thou beatest thy olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow" (ibid. ver. 20); and, as the legislator loves to introduce historical allusions, he adds: "and thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing" (ver. 22). The school of misery through which Israel had passed in Egypt, shall, in future happier times, be for them a school of virtue and moral purification. 6. "At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thy increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates: and the Levite (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee), and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, who are within thy gates, shall come and shall eat and be satisfied, that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hand which thou doest" (Deut. xiv. 28, 29; and in Deut. xxvi. 12—15, a blessing is prescribed, which is to be pronounced on such cheering occasions). These common meals, like those celebrated on festivals (Deut. xvi. 11—14), naturally brought the different classes of the population into continual contact, and gladdened certainly the heart of the distressed more than a cold distant gift, offered with the appearance of haughty superiority. Thus they could not but exercise a salutary influence both morally

and socially; a striking contrast to the customs of the Egyptians, who considered it a perfect abomination to eat with strangers at the same table.

These are the general laws, in which all helpless classes of the nation were equally considered and regarded. It is evident, that, with these institutions, pauperism could not exist in the Mosaic state; and the principle of equality which pervades the whole character of legislation, attempts, and in a great measure succeeds, to remove also the glaring unevenness between the wealthy and the needy. But the individual kinds of poor are, besides, singly and separately provided for by the humane legislator, as will be specified in the following verses.

20. "And the stranger thou shalt neither vex nor oppress him: for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." This reason for the duty of benevolence towards the poor is, in another passage, pronounced still more distinctly: "And thou shalt not oppress a stranger; for you know the heart of the stranger, since you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (xxiii. 9); and this experience was certainly, above all things, calculated to teach the Israelites compassion for the strangers. Not only had they suffered the most ignominious oppression, but witnessed the inveterate hatred which the Egyptians bear to *all* foreigners, and the cruelties which they exhibited against them. And, generally, the duty of hospitality, which was liberally practised in ancient times, as it still is at present in the East, seems to have been scrupulously exercised by the Hebrews. We have already alluded to the probable difference between the two kinds of strangers specified in the Mosaic law, the "stranger" and "foreigner." We need scarcely go further than compare Exodus xii. 29 with vers. 45 and 48, and it will be obvious that the *strangers*, by undergoing the act of circumcision as the sign of the covenant, enter into the community of the He-

widows, and your children orphans.—24. If thou lendest money to *any of my people that is poor by thee*, thou

brew commonwealth; whilst the *foreigners* have only taken their temporary abode in the boundaries of the Hebrew realm, and might quit it without being, by any remaining connection, united with Mosaism. From this point of view, those passages are, we believe, easily and unforcedly explained (see on xii. 19, 45). The Talmud and the Rabbins call the former class of strangers generally strangers of justice or strangers of the covenant, and the latter strangers of the gate. Untenable is the difference which Michaelis (Mos. R. ii. § 138) establishes: "Every body who does not possess landed property is a stranger; he who has no house of his own is a foreigner." The distinction is, according to xii. 19, 45, more of a religious than of a civil character, and it can import little with respect to the admittance to the paschal-lamb, whether a person possesses fields and houses or not. And as the stranger has, by circumcision, adopted the covenant of Israel, he has, in every respect, the same rights and duties as the native Israelite (Lev. xxiv. 22; Num. xv. 14—16, 29). Both with regard to political and personal privileges, he enjoys perfect equality with the descendants of Jacob. This is the fundamental principle, which renders it almost superfluous to enumerate all the individual laws concerning the stranger: that they had in the courts of justice equal rights with the Israelites; that, in cases of justifiable homicide, they had the privilege of seeking protection in the cities of refuge; that they were bound to attend the reading of the Law at the Feast of Tabernacles every seventh year; participated in the Pesach; were subjected to the same laws of incest and matrimony; had to observe the same precepts concerning sacrifices and purifications; were obliged to keep the Sabbath and the Day of Atonement; to abstain from eating blood and forbidden meat; and, in a word, from every thing which would be an abomination in an Israelite. And so impressively and

warmly does Moses enjoin the duties towards strangers, that he expressly commands: "thou shalt love him like thyself" (Lev. xix. 24); it appears almost, that he wished rather to encourage the admission of strangers into the Hebrew state than to prevent it; so that the reproach, that Moses gave blind and narrow-minded laws, which excluded every contact with other nations, is one of those traditional prejudices which disappear at a more comprehensive and thorough investigation of the sacred writings. The reader will thus be able duly to appreciate the heedless aspersion of Tacitus (Hist. v. 5), "that the Hebrews bore enmity and hatred to all strangers." Winer observes: "A perfect isolation of the Hebrew people was in no way the design of the Mosaic law; for, in Solomon's time, there lived 153,600 strangers in Palestine (2 Chron. ii. 16)....and the legal treatment of the stranger was more humane among the Hebrews than in the earlier times among the Romans, and even the Athenians." Even Ezekiel (xlvi. 21—23) assigns, in the distribution of the ideal land of Israel, to the stranger equal property and equal inheritance with the native Israelites; and Nehem. xiii. 3 proves no *expulsion* of the stranger, but merely a segregation of the Ammonites and Moabites (ver. 1).

For policy and historical reminiscences dictated some exceptions from the laws concerning strangers: "The Ammonite and the Moabite shall not come into the congregation of the Lord, even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever" (Deut. xxiii. 4). The Edomites, who are so nearly akin to the Israelites, and the Egyptians, in whose country the Hebrews had dwelt so many centuries, could, in the third generation, that is, the grandchildren of those who immigrated into Canaan, be admitted in the Hebrew community (vers. 9, 10); and the members of other heathen nations no doubt after a

shalt not be to him ¹like a creditor; ²thou shalt not lay

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—As an usurer.

² Neither shalt thou.

proportionate period. This precept was necessary, if the purity of the Mosaic religion was really to be preserved; the pagan strangers must first, by education and habit, be inured to the notions and religious rites of the Hebrews, before they could, without danger, be received as autonomous members of the state. Besides, castrated persons and the offspring of public prostitutes were entirely excluded, in order rigidly to deter from unnatural abominations and criminal immorality. The milder the wise legislator is in securing to everybody his human rights, the severer he is entitled to be in the punishment of violated divine duties. Even confederacies with heathen nations were not unconditionally prohibited; and Hebrew history teaches us, for instance, that David had concluded an alliance with the kings of Tyre and Hamath, and that Solomon stood in a similar relation at least with the former monarch, although his connection with the queen of Sheba is less distinct. And if the prophets yet warned against foreign allies, they were actuated rather by political than religious motives; for they considered it particularly imprudent to enter into leagues with such mighty states as Egypt, Assyria or Babylon, whose far superior power must, as those wise and inspired men foresaw, necessarily become fatal to the Israelitish commonwealth, and, in fact, did become so in most cases; just as Frederick the Great considered it dangerous to call in the aid of Russia against Sweden, because, as that monarch said prophetically enough, "we must never let loose the bear." It is, therefore, an incontrovertible truth, that although the people of Israel remained in opposition to the heathen nations, they freely allowed the individuals to join the Hebrew community as soon as they promised perfect obedience to the law; both in theory and in practice they always adhered to this rule. It is, however, one of the most beautiful and most ar-

dently longed for hopes of the Messianic predictions, once to see all the nations of the earth in a happy alliance with Israel (Isa. ii. 2, *et seq.*; xlii. 6; xlix. 6; lvi. 6, *et seq.* etc). Nevertheless, a missionary activity for the conversion of heathens was exercised only at a very late epoch of Jewish history, and was then, after a short period, altogether and for ever abandoned. The Rabbins have rather hindered than facilitated the admission of strangers into the Hebrew covenant; and the Jews are, at present, perhaps, among all confessions and sects, those who favour proselytism the least.

It is self-evident, that all precepts concerning strangers apply only to the "strangers of justice," since the other class, the "strangers of the gate," are only tolerated foreigners. These latter remain, according to the Talmudical expositions, essentially heathens; but, lest their example become injurious and dangerous to the religious purity of the Hebrew citizens, they were required strictly to adhere to the seven so-called laws of Noah, binding upon all men, which interdicted blasphemy, idolatry, murder, incest as regards the forbidden degrees of marriage, plunder, disobedience against the authorities of the state, and the eating of flesh cut from a living beast. The "strangers of the gate" were naturally excluded from the participation of the paschal-lamb, and of the holy bread (Exod. xii. 45; Levit. xxii. 10), but they enjoyed the privileges of the cities of refuge (Numb. xxxv. 15); they were entitled to relief if they were poor (Levit. xxv. 35); interest on loans granted to them was forbidden, and it was likewise enjoined not to oppress them in any way (ver. 36); they were allowed to acquire property, and even to possess Hebrew servants (ver. 47); but they could also, like a foreign slave, be sold to an Israelite as an hereditary property (ver. 45).

The "strangers of justice" entered into

upon him 'interest. 25. If thou at all takest thy neigh-

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Usury.

the community of Hebrew citizens by the solemn ceremonies of circumcision, baptism, and of a sacrifice. It is self-understood, that after these acts they were expected to resign every connection with their paternal gods, and even with their idolatrous relatives. About the antiquity of *baptism* as a necessary ceremony or sacrament, in embracing Judaism, even ancient authorities offer contradictory opinions. According to some authorities it is scarcely older than the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, although it might, as a natural lustration, have been in use on such occasions from a very remote period.

21. The particular laws concerning the *widow* are: "If a priest's daughter be a widow, or divorced, and have no child, and return to her father's house, as in her youth, she shall eat of her father's food," but there shall no stranger eat thereof (Levit. xxii. 13): 2nd. "Thou shalt not take the widow's raiment to pledge" (Deut. xxiv. 17; compare Job xxiv. 3, where even the act of taking a necessary animal of a widow or of an orphan as a pledge, is characterized as wickedness): 3rd. A High-priest was not allowed to marry a widow (Levit. xxi. 14; compare Eze. xliv. 22). Besides these laws a kind and considerate treatment of the widows is, in numerous passages, emphatically enjoined, and their oppression is most severely denounced by the prophets. About the right of inheritance on the part of the widow, the Mosaic law contains no regulations; she probably remained in the house of the first-born, or any other child who had the duty to maintain her. The *orphans*, being almost the most helpless class of all destitute persons, are generally included in the precepts concerning the poor, the stranger, and the widow, and everywhere considered with most affectionate benevolence.

23. The punishment of hardheartedness against the weak is pronounced with

extraordinary emphasis, and a severe "measure for measure" is threatened.

If we cast one glance more on the laws of Moses regarding the stranger, the poor, the widow and the orphan, we cannot but acknowledge that a refreshing spirit of brotherly love pervades every part of these injunctions. The ideas, that all men are children of the same father, that everybody possesses his property only as a loan, and an act of grace of Him to whom belongs the world and its abundance; that, therefore, he who gives to the poor not only "lendeth to the Lord," but restores to Him merely a small atom of all the bountiful gifts which He daily showers upon him: these, and all the kindred ideas of benevolence, humility, fear of God, and love of mankind, are visibly impressed upon these incomparable laws. Mosaism is a doctrine both theoretical and practical, both religious and moral, calculated both to enlighten the mind and to warm the heart; a religion of faith and of deed; of monotheism and of love. But those two characteristics are not opposed to each other; they are scarcely different, they converge in the same point, they are the emanations of the same power. "He who oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker; but he who honoureth Him hath mercy on the poor" (Prov. xiv. 31): "he who doth not redeem his brother, doth not give his expiation to God" (Psalm xlix. 8). The love of the poor is based on the love of God, the one supports and strengthens the other. "God accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor! for they all *are* the work of His hand" (Job xxxiv. 19; compare Malachi ii. 10); before God all mortals are equals; all worldly greatness is vanity; all are created beings, insignificant before the majesty of God; and this idea suffices to eradicate pride and haughtiness of the heart. "The rich and the poor meet together: the Lord is the Maker of

bour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt return it to him by sun-set. 26. For that *is* his covering only; it *is* his

them all"; however different the earthly positions of men are, they have that one great and sacred point of contact, that they all bear the image of God, that they have an internal and everlasting affinity, which has its origin in an imperishable boon; and this conviction precludes overweening conduct towards a fellow-man, and teaches humility and genuine benevolence. Thus the belief in God is no barren doctrine; its first and most pre-

cious offspring is love to mankind; and brotherly love again is not left alone and unsupported, but is powerfully and indestructibly connected with the belief in God; thus Mosaism combines God and men, heaven and earth, eternity and time, the intellect and the heart—and in uniting everything sacred and sublime in one all-comprising point, it bore in it, from the beginning, the germ of a universal and eternal religion.

24. ABOUT LOANS AND INTERESTS. VER. 24.

We have already observed, that Moses commanded as a religious duty of charity, to assist persons in reduced circumstances with timely loans (Deut. xv. 7—11), and that the lender had sufficient guarantees for his advances in the harvests, the houses, the beasts, and, if necessary, in the persons of his debtors. Imprisonment or torture, in cases of insolvency, are nowhere mentioned in the Mosaic code; those means of punishment were only later introduced, according to the juridical practice of the Romans. The conduct of heartless creditors, who sometimes deprived their debtors of the most indispensable utensils, and took even their wives and children from them, was severely denounced by the prophets and teachers in Israel (2 Kings iv. 1; Neh. v. 5; Isa. l. 1). In the Sabbath-year, debts could not even be demanded back from Israelites whose fields then rested, and yielded no harvest (Deut. xv. 1, *et seq.*), but to refuse loans, because the Sabbath-year was near, is described as abject baseness of the heart (ver. 9, see p. 329). The humane and lenient character of Mosaism is again strikingly evident in these precepts, which appear to still greater advantage, if compared with the Roman laws concerning the payment of borrowed money. According to Gellius xx. 1, it was ordained in the Twelve Tables, that if the debtor admitted the debt, or had been condemned in the amount of the debt by a judge, he had thirty days allowed him for payment.

At the expiration of this time, he was liable to be assigned over to the creditor by the sentence of the prætor. The creditor was required to keep him for sixty days in chains, during which time he publicly exposed the debtor on three market-days, and proclaimed the amount of his debt. If no person released the prisoner by paying the debt, the creditor might sell him as a slave, or put him to death. If there were several creditors, the letter of the law allowed them to cut the debtor in pieces, and to take their share of his body in proportion to their debt. Although, as Gellius says, there was no instance of a creditor having adopted this extreme mode of satisfying his debt, that permission, and the possibility of acting so, show the barbarous character of that law. It was only by the Lex Poetelia (B.C. 326) that the condition of the debtors was alleviated.

To take interest for money borrowed by the poor was entirely forbidden by the Hebrew lawgiver; because it would have been a hardship for them, and would in most cases have defeated the object of the loan, which aimed at assisting them in regaining their former independence. But it is usually asserted, that it was equally unlawful to take interest from the rich, because Moses did, in general, not wish to encourage commerce, but intended to accustom the people exclusively to agriculture; and rich persons

raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? And it shall come to pass, when he crieth to me, that I will hear *him* ;

will, ordinarily, borrow money only for the purpose of mercantile speculations, which would have tended to alienate them from the pursuits of agriculture, and ultimately to endanger the equality of the citizens. It is added, that it would have been difficult to fix, who was opulent enough to pay interest; and that the permission of taking per centage would inevitably have turned out to the disadvantage of the poor, to whom nobody would easily have granted loans, if there was the possibility of investing the money more safely and more advantageously in the hands of the rich. However, neither the letter nor the spirit of our law justify such interpretation:

1. In our passage we read distinctly: "If thou lendest money to any of my people that is poor....thou shalt not lay upon him interest"; and still more clearly in Lev. xxv. 35—37: "And if thy brother become poor and be reduced to poverty with thee, then thou shalt relieve him; take thou no interest of him, or increase; but fear thy God, that thy brother may live with thee." These words are too clear to be mistaken; the loans of which those passages treat are loans of charity; the prohibition against taking interest stands here in the midst of a cycle of laws enacted in favour of the needy, the orphan, the widow, and the stranger; it is addressed more to the feeling than the understanding; and is coupled with the law of pledges, which concludes with the most pathetic and affecting appeal to the heart. The circumstance, that in Deut. xxiii. 20, the law is expressed with the general terms: "Thou shalt not lend upon interest to thy brother," has little influence upon the bearings of the case, since Deuteronomy contains merely a sketch of the laws formerly given in greater detail; we must frequently illustrate the fifth book from the three preceding ones; a contradiction between both is impossible; but deviations *in the form* are even found in the decalogue,

the kernel and most sacred part of the whole legislation. 2. Although commerce was not encouraged by Moses, he could not systematically exclude it: and if he feared dangerous consequences from foreign trade, he could have no objection to a home commerce, which was indispensable in a great and flourishing state, the comforts of which inclined, in some periods, to luxury. We see, in fact, commerce not only carried on in the time of Solomon, but before and after his reign. 3. As this law belongs to the class of charitable provisions, it must be left to the conscience and feeling of every body to decide, who is in want of a loan without interest, and who not; in such precepts of benevolence rigid injunctions are impossible; it is the very nature of charity and brotherly love, to disregard external advantage, and merely to seek internal satisfaction; it was, therefore, not to be feared, that if it was allowed to take interest from the rich, nobody would lend to the poor; just as little as we apprehend at present, that because every capitalist can lucratively invest his money, charity will cease to exist among us. Those laws, which are given for the heart, and the reward and punishment for which are withdrawn from the earthly judge and assigned to the Eternal, must necessarily leave some scope to feeling; charity would, indeed, lose its grace and its beatifying charm, if it were encompassed in strict and compulsory regulations. Moses could, therefore, not forbid a reasonable per centage controlled by the state, for loans advanced to persons in prosperous circumstances, who might momentarily require it for a thousand possible emergencies.

It was also lawful to take interests from foreigners (Deut. xxiii. 21), because with regard to these, the reason above stated did not exist. If an Israelite possessed superfluous capital, he could reasonably demand some compensation from a member of a foreign state for the risk incurred

for I *am* compassionate.—27. Thou shalt not revile 'God, nor curse ²a magistrate of thy people.—28. Thou shalt

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—The gods.

² The ruler.

by him; and if the foreigner applied that capital to commercial undertakings, no Mosaic principle was in the least endangered. Moreover, the right of reciprocity prevailed in these laws. For it was supposed that foreign nations also would not lend to Israelites without interest: the Israelites, therefore, on their part, were not prohibited taking from them some indemnification for the use of their money. From the same principle of reciprocity, the Hebrews were permitted to insist in the Sabbath-year upon the payment of debts due to them by non-Israelites, because it was to be expected that the latter also, who were not bound by the Mosaic precepts, would not hesitate to exact debts from the Hebrews (Deut. xxiii. 21). The Pentateuch offers us no clue to decide what the usual per centage was; in Nehemiah v. 11, the hundredth part is mentioned; but it is not clear, whether this was the annual or the monthly interest (as among the Romans).

Besides the *interest*, the law interdicts *increase* (Lev. xxv. 36, 37); namely, if a person lends to another fruits or corn or other natural products, he is not allowed to demand in return a greater quantity than he has lent him. According to others it is an increase at the repayment of capital, for which the creditor has received no interest, which would, in fact, only be another form of usury.—It is, therefore, not surprising that *usury* is in the Old Testament branded with the utmost contempt and ignominy; even the word *interest* is, in Hebrew, traced back to a root which signifies *to bite like a serpent*, and thus obtained in the minds of the people a hateful and abominated notion. It is, indeed,

undeniable that the sacred legislator, and all the other inspired writers, exhausted the whole power of human language to effect a radical extirpation of that vice; and if the fundamental conditions of a pious and virtuous life are enumerated, abstinence from interest is seldom omitted (Ps. xv. 5, etc.), as on the other hand, the most awful curses of heaven are called down upon the heartless usurer (Job xxiv. 9, 20, etc.). The legal punishment set on usury is not stated in the Old Testament; but besides the restitution of the unjust gain, the universal, public defamation was a punishment more tormenting than either fines or imprisonment.—The wording of our verse seems to intimate, that feneration was, in the time of Moses, a common vice among the nations with which the Israelites came into contact: "thou shalt not be to him like the usual creditors." As the prohibition to take no interest applies only to Israelites, not to foreigners, our text uses the phrase "any of my people that is poor." But those words contain no intimation, that the majority, or the bulk of the people, consisted of poor persons; for no legislation has taken greater care to prevent pauperism than that of Moses; although naturally, in the course of time, manifold inequalities of property could not fail to arise. For those who seek the prototypes of the Mosaic laws in the Egyptian institutions, we add the following passage from Diodorus Siculus (i. 79): "According to the Egyptian law, it was forbidden to allow the interest to increase to more than *double* the original sum. But the creditor was not permitted to seize the debtor's person, whilst it was lawful to take his property for the debt."

25. ABOUT THE RIGHT OF PLEDGES. VERS. 25, 26.

Moses permitted the creditor, as a security for his loans, to take pledges, but under the following salutary and humane restrictions: 1. If the pledge

was the raiment of the *poor* debtor, the creditor was bound to return it to him in the evening; for the great, long garment served in the day as a dress, and in the

not delay to offer ¹from the abundance of thy corn and the choicest of thy wine; the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—The first of thy ripe fruits and of thy liquors.

night as a cover (see on ver. 26; Deut. xxiv. 12); and he, who refuses to comply with this command, calls upon himself the special vengeance of the compassionate God (ver. 26; Deut. xxiv. 13; Ezek. xviii. 12).

2. The hand-mill and the mill-stones were not permitted to be taken at all as pledges (Deut. xxiv. 6), because they were indispensable for the preparation of the flour and bread, that is, the most necessary articles of subsistence. After the same analogy, all similar utensils were likewise prohibited to be taken as pledges, as the implements of agriculture, or the animals necessary for its cultivation (Job xxii. 6). 3. The creditor shall not himself enter into the house of the debtor, but wait before the door, till the latter delivers up to him the pledge, evidently from fear, lest the former, tempted by personal inspection, take a more valuable or an indispensable object (Deut. xxiv. 10, 11).

—According to the whole agrarian constitution of Moses, the sales of territorial estates were virtually nothing but mortgages, or transfers of the produce of the soil, since the fields, which, as in the legislation of Lycurgus, were inalienable property of the family (Lev. xxv.), in the

year of jubilee, fell back to the proprietors without indemnification. About the pledges connected with promises, see Genesis xxxviii. 17, *et seq.*; about hostages, 2 Kings xiv. 14. Jewish tradition has, in perfect harmony with the spirit of the Mosaic laws, added a great number of excellent precepts, entirely framed in the interest of the poor and distressed, and intended to protect them from shame and degradation.

26. Over the tunic the Bedouins in Asia and North-Africa wear a blanket, called *haih*, (i.e., cover), which resembles perfectly the plaid of the Scotch Highlanders. These haiks are of different sizes, and of different quality and fineness. They are commonly six yards long, and five or six feet broad; serving the Kabyle and Arab for a complete dress in the day; and as they sleep in raiment, like the Israelites of old, it serves likewise for their bed and covering by night. It is a loose, but troublesome garment, frequently discomposed, and falling upon the ground, so that the person who wears it, is every moment obliged to tuck it up, and fold it anew about the body.

26. DISRESPECT TOWARDS GOD AND THE AUTHORITIES. VER. 27.

The decalogue already contains a solemn interdiction against abusing the holy name for purposes of falsehood; it is, therefore, natural that disrespect, especially if it manifested itself in cursing the deity was visited with the severest punishments. In Leviticus xxiv. 15, 16, this law is more distinctly thus expressed: "And thou shalt speak to the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. And he who blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger as he who is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death" (compare vers. 10—12). This violation of the reverence due to

God is, in a theocratical state, the only possible form of the crimes *læsæ majestatis* and of high-treason; it undermines the foundation of the political edifice; and the whole community was, therefore, interested in punishing such transgressions.

As the chief magistrate exercises the executive power in the name and by the laws of God, reverence towards him is, in a religious and political point of view, equally indispensable, and the combination of these two laws, concerning God and the magistrates, is thus easily explicable. But some expositors have taken *God* here in the signification of *judges*, as in xxi. 6. But the judges are implied in the following term, magistrate; and God alone, in

give to me. 29. The same shalt thou do with thy oxen, *and* with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with its mother, on the eighth day thou shalt give it me.—30. And

the meaning of judges, is used in passages only where judicial proceedings are clearly treated of, not in an abrupt command, as in our verse. Still less appropriate is the conception of God here as strange gods or idols, as Josephus and Philo assert, observing, that Moses wished to prevent the heathens from abusing, in a similar manner, the name of the God of Israel from motives of retaliation. It has, however, been correctly remarked by Michaelis, that this interpretation was shrewdly advanced by Josephus, in order to convince the Romans, that even their deities were treated by the Israelites with a certain respect;

whilst such apologetical considerations could not possibly influence a legislator who framed his laws, not for a *subjugated*, but for a *governing* people. Moreover, that interpretation would not agree with the words of the text: "Whoever curseth his God;" since the strange gods would not be the gods of the *Israelites*. The Koran prescribes, that "the person who utters blasphemy against God, or Mohammed, or Christ, or Moses, or any prophet, is to be put to death without delay, even though he profess himself repentant; repentance for such a sin being deemed impossible." Thus blasphemy is considered a more heinous sin than apostasy.

27. ABOUT THE OFFERING OF THE FIRST FRUITS. VERS. 28, 29, AND XXIII. 19 (FIRST PART).

The law concerning the *firstlings* is here but briefly alluded to, and is, in later passages, more fully treated. To God belonged the firstlings of corn, of tree-fruits, and of grapes; further, the first wine, oil, flour, and dough, even the first wool of the sheep. The priests, as God's servants, received these gifts, since they had no territorial property of their own. A measure of the firstlings is not fixed in the Pentateuch; the Talmud takes one-sixtieth part of the produce as the minimum, but recommends one-thirtieth. Jewish tradition demands, however, the firstlings only of the seven chief productions of Palestine: "wheat, barley, vine, figs, pomegranates, olives, and honey" (Deut. viii. 8). In Deut. xxvi. 2—11, the mode of offering the firstlings is described. They were laid in a basket and brought into the temple to the High-priest, who place the basket before the altar; then the boundless mercy which God has shewn to the Israelites since

their immigration into Egypt was briefly but emphatically alluded to.

About the sanctification of the first-born of men and beasts, see note on xiii. 2. Compare Num. xviii. 15—18.—It is well known, that similar offerings of the first and best fruits to the gods were common to nearly all the nations of antiquity, as a natural manner of divine veneration; so they were in use among the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Hyperboreans, and others. The first-fruits of all newly-planted trees belonged also to God; but, as the fruits are generally in the first few years very imperfect and tasteless, they were not to be used at all; the produce of the fourth year belonged to God; and from the fifth year only the proprietor had the fruition (Lev. xix. 23—25).—*On the eighth day thou shalt give it me.* "Lambs became pure on the eighth day, calves on the twentieth, after their birth" (*Plin. Hist. Nat.* 8).

28. ABOUT UNLAWFUL MEAT. VER. 30.

As in the brief outline of the fundamental laws contained in chapters xxi. to xxiii. no important precept could be

omitted, a principal injunction regarding the dietary laws is, with a few words, incorporated in this code. A great num-

you shall be holy men to me: neither shall you eat *any* flesh *that is torn of beasts* in the field; you shall cast it to the dogs.

ber of these commands proceed from the simple maxim, that the blood is the soul of the animal, and that it must, from this reason, not be eaten (Lev. xvii. 11, 14; Deut. xii. 23). If, therefore, a beast is found dead, it may well be supposed that it was "suffocated in its blood," and that it did not expire in a normal way. This is therefore entirely interdicted to the Israelites. Although such animal might, in most cases, be unwholesome, and the use of its flesh be deemed injurious, it could yet not be forbidden to strangers and foreigners, as they were, in this case, not actuated by any *religious*, but merely by a *sanitary*, consideration, and they will certainly have spontaneously abstained from such flesh in all doubtful cases (see Deut. xiv. 21). But there was another sort of unlawful meat, which is mentioned in our verse, namely, if an animal was torn by a wild beast, a jackal, a fox, a wolf, or a rabid dog, the use of its flesh is naturally and evidently injurious for *all*, and is therefore forbidden to all without exception: "it shall be thrown before the dogs." But if, nevertheless, a man eats of such meat, "whether he be a proselyte or a native Hebrew, he shall wash his clothes, bathe himself, and be unclean until the evening" (Lev. xvii. 15). These words imply, besides, the intimation, that the laws concerning unlawful meat have also a reference to the *purity* and *sanctity* of Israel, individually and nationally; since the nature of food has commonly no inconsiderable influence upon the refinement and the manners of a people; and that those laws have this spiritual basis is obvious, both from our passage and from Deut. iv. 21 ("and you shall be holy men to me;" "for a holy nation thou art to the Lord thy God;" see also Lev. xi. 43, 44; compare on these

expressions note to xix. 6). What is torn is forbidden, wherever it be found; but our verse mentions the usual case, if the animal was torn in the *field*. The Koran (v. 4) has borrowed these precepts from the Mosaic law: "You are forbidden to eat that which has died of itself, and the blood (and pork, and that at the killing of which the name of another deity except God has been invoked), and that which was suffocated, and that which was killed by strokes or by a fall, or by the horns of another animal, and that which was torn by wild beasts, except if you have first killed it entirely" [that is, if it was still alive when it came into your hands, and was then killed by you in the lawful manner]. Compare ii. 175; xvi. 115; and Niebuhr (Descr. of Ar. p. 178, 179) remarks: "The general rule of the Mohammedans is, according to the opinion of the doctors of Bassora, not to eat any animal which attacks men, or which tears human bodies. They are further forbidden to eat an animal which was torn by another animal. If, for instance, a dog has only tasted the blood of game, it is not interdicted (*halâl*); but if he has eaten some portion of the flesh also, it is forbidden (*herâm*).... The Mohammedans are, in general, not permitted to eat an animal, the death of which was not accompanied with the shedding of blood," obviously, because then the soul was believed to be still in the animal; as the Rabbins also call the blood the "essence of the sacrifice," and propose the principle: "There is no atonement, except by the *blood* of the sacrifice." Even in the ancient Greek writers we find similar precepts to that enjoined in our verse; and analogous principles are adhered to in the customary right of all civilized nations.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THOU shalt not raise a false report: put not thy hand with the wicked to be 'a witness for violence.

2. Thou shalt not follow the many to evil, neither

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—An unrighteous witness.

29. ABOUT JUDICIAL JUSTICE. VERS. 1—3, 6—8.

The condensed code of the Law, which is concluded in this chapter, naturally carries out the consequences of the Ten Commandments; and, after murder has been treated in xxi. 12—14, theft in xxi. 37, *et seq.*, the ninth commandment is now further developed: not to bear false witness against our neighbour. From this principle follows, neither to join the wicked to confirm a false evidence, nor, in pronouncing judgment, to follow the blind indiscriminating multitude to the detriment of justice, nor even to favour the poor in the courts of the law from ill-placed pity. Originally the chiefs and elders of the tribes and families were, no doubt, the judges between contending tribes or quarrelling members of the same tribe (Deut. i. 16); the local tribunals (xvi. 18) were most likely also presided over by the elders of the respective towns. In difficult cases, the decision was referred to the priests and Levites at the temple (Deut. xvii. 8, *etc.*). In the time of the judges, these exercised the right of jurisdiction; a regular administration of justice seems first to have been introduced by Samuel (1 Sam. vii. 16, 18, *et seq.*). Already in the times of David and Solomon, local courts existed (1 Chron. xxiii. 4); the kings formed the highest tribunals of appeal; but they were, besides, accessible to every subject, whatever case he might wish to submit to them (2 Sam. xiv. 4; xv. 2, *et seq.*). The jurisdiction was public—mostly at the gates of the towns—oral and summary (Deut. xxi. 19; xxv. 1). For a legal evidence, two witnesses were at least required (Deut. xix. 15; Num. xxv. 30). If more than one judge formed the tribunal, the opinion of the majority prevailed (Deut. xix. 12; *infra*, ver. 2). The

sentence was executed immediately, before the eyes of the judge (Deut. xxxv. 2; Josh. vii. 19—25, *et seq.*). Every Israelite was eligible as judge, whose intelligence commanded respect, and whose integrity inspired confidence (xviii. 21); the principle of democratic equality pervaded that institution also, and not the Levites alone were admissible to judicial functions, as has been erroneously asserted. The importance and sacredness of these duties are frequently and impressively enjoined (Deut. i. 16, 17; xiii. 15; xvi. 19, 20). Maimonides enumerates seven necessary qualities of a judge: wisdom, humility, fear of God, aversion to avarice, love of truth, popularity, and unblemished reputation. The Hebrew judges were, therefore, held in the highest respect; they are considered as representatives of God; and it was deemed highly criminal to abuse them by deed or language (xxi. 6; xxii. 27).

1. As this verse seems to speak of the *witness*, the first words are to be taken: "thou shalt not *raise* or *pronounce* a false report;" that is, thou shalt, as a witness, not bring forward any evidence, the truth of which is not clearly known to thee, or of the falsehood of which thou art convinced. Thus explains Ebn Ezra: "thou shalt not let go forth from thy heart an untruth to propagate a calumny." But the Septuagint, Vulgate, and others, understand these words to mean: "thou shalt not *take up* or *credit* a false report." But this would, of course, refer to the *judge*, and would therefore scarcely agree with the second part of the verse, which speaks of the duties of a *witness*. — The efficient punishment fixed by Moses for the calumniator and false witness, was, that they suffered

shalt thou speak in a cause to deviate after the many to pervert *justice*. 3. Nor shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause.—4. If thou meet thy enemy's ox or his ass erring about, thou shalt surely bring it back

themselves that very injury which they contemplated to bring over their intended victims—a very wise and just extension of the right of retaliation (Deut. xix. 16—21).

2. Even if thou hearest many pronounce an unjust opinion in a lawsuit, thou shalt not follow them in this injustice; in such case, therefore, thou shalt not lean towards the multitude, to violate the right or to pervert justice. This is the simple sense of our verse, which has, however, been misunderstood by the traditional interpretation; for the last words were taken together and explained: "that we must follow the opinion of the majority"; which would, however, on the one hand, absolutely contradict the first part of the verse: "thou shalt not follow the many to evil," and would, on the other hand, in *moral* questions, be a very doubtful precept,

however commendable it is in abstract questions of the law, and in civil and social government.

3. The legislator has proved by a series of excellent precepts, how deeply he felt for the distress of the poor, and has provided for them with unexampled humanity and truly paternal affection (see notes on xxii. 20—26). But just for this reason he deemed it necessary to enjoin, not to privilege them from misunderstood compassion: for strict justice is the chief and the strongest pillar of every social edifice; and inasmuch as the humble position of the poor ought not to prejudice him in the eyes of the judge (ver. 6), even so should it not be an advantage or a recommendation: "Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor nor honour the person of the mighty; in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour," see ver. 8.

30. ABOUT FOUND PROPERTY. VER. 4.

THE law contained in this verse is expressed more clearly and fully in Deut. xxii. 1—3: "Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox, or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt in any case bring them again to thy brother. And if thy brother is not nigh to thee, or if thou dost not know him, then thou shalt bring it to thy house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him again. In like manner, shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his raiment, and with all lost things of thy brother's which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself." But if the proprietor is only discovered some time afterwards, and if he died in the meantime, his relatives receive the property; if he has no relatives it is handed over to the priests (Numb. v. 8). But if the finder has at-

tempted to keep it for himself, he must restore it together with the fifth part of its value, and sacrifice a ram as a guilt-offering (Deut. v. 6, 7). If a person is suspected to have fraudulently kept found property, an oath is administered to him; and if he is guilty of a false oath, he has—besides the usual infamy attending perjury—to restore, in addition, the fifth part of the value, and to sacrifice a guilt-offering, that God may pardon his transgression (Levit. v. 20—26). In this, and in the following verse, the *enemy* is treated of, as the animosity against him may tempt a man to injustice; and all obligations of love, due to an enemy, must, as a matter of course, be extended to all our fellow-men. And even the thoroughly orthodox protestant divine, Gerlach, writes: "In these laws, genuine, active love for an enemy, is inculcated; they prove how unjust it is unconditionally to

to him.—5. If thou seest the ass of him that hateth thee lying under its burden, 'forbear to leave *it* to it; thou shalt leave *it only* with him.—6. Thou shalt not bend the judgment of thy poor in his cause. 7. From a false cause thou shalt keep aloof; and the innocent and righteous

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.

ascribe to the Old Testament the sentence in Matt. v. 43: 'You have heard that it has

been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, but hate thine enemy.'

31. HUMANITY TOWARDS ANIMALS. VER. 5.

THE truly humane and wise precept of this verse is, in itself, sufficiently clear, but it gains additional light by the parallel passage in Deut. xxii. 4: "Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again." But, however unquestionable this *sense* is, the *words* of our verse are extremely disputed. The simplest and clearest interpretation is the following: "If thou seest the ass of thy enemy lying under his burden, forbear to leave it (the burden) to him (the ass); thou shalt leave it (or the place) only with him (the master)." The law enjoined in our verse was, 1st., *necessary* among an agricultural people, where the loss of a beast of burden might cause the ruin of a citizen; and, 2nd., *practicable*, as every body learnt from his youth how to manage animals, and was therefore well enabled to assist his fellow-men in cases like those to which our verse alludes. The wisdom and humanity of this law is self-evident; it is both advantageous for the prosperity of the community, and considerate for the sufferings of an over-burdened animal, and efficacious in eradicating a blind and destructive hatred among the members of the same commonwealth. Other precepts of compassion towards animals are enjoined in ver. 19; in Lev. xxii. 28; Deut. xxii. 6, 7, 10; and xxv. 4; which will be explained in their due places. We have in the larger edition of this work reviewed the expositions of ancient and modern interpreters on this verse.

6. See on ver. 3.

7. *From a false cause thou shalt keep aloof*; that is, as a judge thou shalt shun every falsehood, and strictly adhere to truth, and even—as Rabbinical interpreters explain—if thou seest that the court or the witnesses are inclined to injustice, rather resign every connection with them. Compare Lev. xix. 15, 35; Deut. i. 16, 17; xvi. 18—20; xxiv. 17; xxv. 1—3.—*And the innocent and righteous slay thou not*; strive not to oppress or injure the innocent before thy tribunal; *for I will not justify the wicked*; that is, the judge who pronounces unjust verdicts.

8. As all the laws concerning judges have only been given, in order to secure impartiality of jurisdiction, but as this end is necessarily defeated by the acceptance of any kind of presents or bribes from either party: such practice has been unconditionally and emphatically forbidden, the reason being added because bribery "maketh blind the seeing, and perverteth the words of the righteous"; even wise and conscientious judges are, from the weakness of human nature, led away from inflexible and uncompromising justice by insinuating presents, and even flattering words, and other marks of personal attention; but the judge, in exercising his functions, must forget his own person, and live entirely for his holy and responsible duties (compare Deut. xvi. 19, 20). It is not the fault of the inspired lawgiver, if later very frequently the loudest and justest complaints against impudent corruptions of the judges were raised (Isaiah i. 23; v. 23; Psalms xxvi. 10;

slay thou not: for I shall not justify the wicked. 8. And thou shalt take no ²bribery; for the bribery blindeth the ³seeing, and perverteth the words of the righteous.—9. And thou shalt not oppress a stranger; for you know the heart of the stranger, since you were strangers in the

² Engl. Vers.—Gift.

³ Wise.

Prov. xvii. 23; xviii. 6, etc.).—A punishment for bribery is not mentioned in the Mosaic law; according to Josephus (Ap. ii. 27) it was considered a capital crime. A corrupt judge deserved, at least, the same punishment as a false witness (Deut. xix. 16—21).

9. About the right of the stranger, see on xxii. 20—26; and about the expressions used in our verse, see *ibid.* ver. 20.

32. ABOUT SABBATH AND SABBATH-YEAR. VER. 10—12.

ALTHOUGH every calm Biblical critic will sedulously keep aloof from mystic speculations on the hidden properties of the numbers, it cannot be denied, that in the sacred volume some numbers predominate, which bear a holy and religious character. Among these the number *seven* ranks first. Its frequent, almost regular repetition, cannot be accidental. The seventh day is the Sabbath, the seventh year the Sabbath of the fields; after seven times seven years the jubilee, or the perfect restoration of the original conditions of property ensues; the seventh new-moon is the “day of the sound of the trumpet,” or “the day of remembrance”; the seventh month is almost entirely occupied with the holiest festivals; Passover lasted seven days, and on every day a sacrifice of seven lambs was offered; seven days was the Feast of Tabernacles, and seven weeks lie between Passover and Pentecost; seven days the young animals remained with their mothers before they were fit for firstling-offerings (Exod. xxii. 29); the circumcision was performed after full seven days from the birth; seven days was the legal duration for many Levitical lustrations; during seven days the priests were initiated; seven times the blood was sprinkled at important expiatory sacri-

Compare the verse of Virgil: “Not unacquainted with misfortune I have learned to succour the distressed” (*Æn.* i. 630). — The context leads spontaneously to the idea, that in the courts of justice the strangers and the natives are to be treated with perfect equality, which duty is expressly enjoined in Deut. i. 16.

fices; seven days lasted the mourning for the dead (Gen. i. 10); seven days also the marriages (Judg. xiv. 12); seven animals were, in primeval times, presented, on solemn occasions, as alliances and promises (Gen. xxi. 28—30); and the sacred word *oath* is etymologically connected with the number *seven*; symbolical actions are repeated seven times (1 Kings xviii. 43; 2 Kings v. 10, 14; compare Genesis iv. 15; Ezekiel xxxix. 9; xl. 22; xli. 3; Num. xxiii. 1, 14, 29; 1 Chron. x. 12, etc.); the mark of the highest reverence was a sevenfold prostration (Gen. xxxiii. 3); and a progeny of seven children was considered a peculiar blessing (1 Sam. ii. 5; Jer. xv. 9; Job i. 2); seven was, in fact, frequently used as a number signifying *many*, in general, or as the number *par excellence* (Deut. xxviii. 7; Judg. xv. 7, 17; 2 Kings iv. 35; Psalms cxix. 164; Prov. xxiv. 16; xxvi. 15; Isaiah iv. 1; xi. 15; Job v. 19; Mich. v. 4; Ruth iv. 15). Seven chief utensils were in the holy Tabernacle: 1. the altar of burnt-offerings; 2. the laver; 3. the shew-bread table; 4. the altar of incense; 5. the candelabrum; 6. the ark; and 7. the mercy-seat and the Cherubim, which formed one vessel, xxv. *et seq.* But even in historical events, the number seven is very markedly obvious. Noah took into

land of Egypt.—10. And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the produce thereof: 11. But

the ark seven pairs of every clean animal (Gen. vii. 2); seven days before the beginning of the deluge he was once more informed of it (ver. 4); he waited seven days after having first sent out the dove; and when she returned, seven days more (vers. 10, 12); Jacob served seven years for Leah and seven years for Rachel (Gen. xxix. 20, 27, 30); Pharaoh dreamt of seven fat and seven lean cows, of seven full and of seven empty ears of corn; and accordingly, seven years of abundance and seven years of famine ensued (Gen. xl. 1; compare 2 Sam. xxiv. 13; 2 Kings viii. 1); the father-in-law of Moses had seven daughters (Exod. ii. 16), of whom Moses selected the worthiest for his wife; Jericho was encircled during seven days; on the seventh day, seven priests with seven trumpets passed seven times round the city, which was then only attacked and taken (Josh. vi.); Solomon finished the temple in seven years (1 Kings vi. 38); and at its consecration celebrated a festival of twice seven days (viii. 65). It would be easy, by obvious combinations, to increase this list considerably; and we mention only, that the three patriarchs and their four wives make the number seven; but we may distinctly call attention to the fact, that the three "signs of the Covenant" of Mosaism, circumcision, the Passover, and the Sabbath, are all connected with the number seven. The same mystic number prevails especially in the Indian mythology: a God shines through the world on a chariot drawn by seven horses; there are seven worlds (Locas), seven great continents (Dripas), seven oceans; the human body consists of seven chief members; there are seven periods in the life of man, etc.

The simple and obvious explanation of the holiness of the number seven is, that the ancient Israelites, as most of the Eastern nations, counted originally their months after the course of the moon, which renews itself in four quarters of

7½ days each, and after this time assumes a new phase. These periodical and extraordinary changes of the moon produced a powerful impression upon the susceptible minds of the ancient nations, they excited them to reflections on this wonderful phenomenon, and everything connected with it, assumed, in their eyes, a peculiar significance. Hence the day of the new-moon was generally celebrated with some distinguishing solemnity, which, like all festivals, is regulated and fixed in the Mosaic law (Num. x. 10; xxviii. 11, etc.); and the new moon is in the Old Testament frequently mentioned together with the Sabbath (2 Kings iv. 23; Isaiah i. 18, etc.). Hereto we add, that the number of the seven planets known to them (Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, the Moon), which successively presided over the hours of the day, and each of which commenced therefore a different day, contributed in later times not a little to secure to it that mysterious significance; especially as the result of the astrological pursuits soon brought all human affairs and occupations into some relation with those planets. But that division of the week into seven days was known and adopted by the most different nations, as the Assyrians, Arabs, Indians, Chinese, Peruvians (but not the Persians), and many African and American tribes, which never came into intercourse with the Israelites, and later by the Greeks and Romans, who followed the Egyptians. We must, therefore, recognise therein, not an exclusively theocratical, but a general astronomical arrangement, which offered itself to the simplest planetary observation of every people. Hence we reject the very artificial theories of Baehr, Kurtz, and others, that seven is composed of three (the character of the divine) and four (the character of the Kosmos), and that it therefore signifies the combination of God and the world. However, the historical and other appli-

the seventh *year* thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the

cations of the number seven above introduced, prove unmistakably that the Israelites attached to it a peculiar sanctity and meaning; that it was considered as the number of combination and connection, of unity and harmony, of salvation and blessing, of peace and sanctification; of the covenant between God and Israel (and therefore in some respects indeed the *theocratical* number), of expiation and atonement, of purification and initiation; and it must be admitted, that although the importance of the number seven has originally an astronomical source, the divine legislator nowhere alludes to its planetary character, but endows it with purely spiritual meaning, in accordance with his usual tendency to ennoble the received idolatrous notions into original and elevating truths. About the week of ten and of five days, see note on xii. 3.

It is thus indisputable, that the number seven obviously predominates through all the Mosaic festivals; and even the collective number of the holy *convocations* amounts to seven, namely: *two* on Pass-over, *one* on Pentecost, *one* on the seventh new-moon, *one* on the Day of Atonement, and *two* on the Feast of Tabernacles; and this comprehensive and organic connection of the festivals with each other, has justly been considered as a safe guarantee of their contemporary Mosaic origin. But more extraordinary than the general festivals even, is the cycle of Sabbaths, ordained by Moses, and of course based on that sacred number. Now the Sabbath may either aim at the mental and physical recreation of the individuals, and this is the Sabbath *par excellence*, every seventh day of the week, on which we have already treated in the fourth commandment; or it may be directed to the interests of the landed property, and the rest from agricultural labours; and this is the *release*, every seventh year; or it may, lastly, tend to secure the personal liberty of the Israelites, and in order to make this liberty a real boon, to

accompany it with a perfect restitution of the fields to the former proprietors; and this is the *jubilee*. It cannot be denied, that the chief principle, on which these systematic and comprehensive institutions are based, is the idea that the Israelite belongs, with his person and his property, to God; "for the land is mine, says the Lord, for you are only strangers and sojourners with me" (Lev. xxv. 23); "to me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants, whom I have brought forth from the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God" (ver. 55).—On the Sabbath, which belongs to the Lord (xx. 10), the Israelite shall individually and personally elevate himself to God; in the Sabbath-year the *land* shall remain uncultivated, as God intended then to use it, as it were, for His own purposes, for the poor, the stranger, and the helpless (Lev. xxv. 6, 7); and in the jubilee, all property and persons shall be restored to their original condition, in which they were placed by the divine Law and by the first distribution of the land. This is the higher idea embodied in those peculiar institutions, which possess, however, many other collateral advantages.

The precepts concerning the Sabbath-year are: 1. In Palestine the fields and vineyards shall be cultivated for six years, and their produce gathered; but in the seventh year they shall rest. 2. That produce, however, which grows spontaneously belongs, for common use, to the proprietor, the servants, the hirelings, the strangers, and the beasts. 3. The people shall live from the superfluity of the preceding years, especially the sixth. 4. Except from strangers, debts were not allowed to be exacted, since the proprietors gained no harvests (Deut. xv. 1—3; see *supra* on xxii. 24). The Israelites, therefore, when standing under Roman authority, enjoyed, in the Sabbath-year, exemption from taxes; and, 5. On the Feast of Tabernacles of every seventh year the Law of Moses

beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt do with thy vineyard *and* with thy oliveyard.—12. Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thy ox and thy ass may rest, and the son

was to be recited in the temple to the whole nation, men and children and strangers (Deut. xxxi. 10—13). But the release of the slaves took place after the sixth year of their *servitude*, irrespective of the Sabbath-year (see p. 292). From this exposition, the following accessory advantages of the Sabbath-year are evident: 1. The soil enjoyed a regular rest, doubly necessary in the imperfect state of agriculture of those ages, and calculated considerably to enhance the fertility in the other years. 2. It is supposed (according to Michaelis and others), that the Israelites, in order to prevent want or scarcity in the seventh year, economized the abundance of their harvests and stored them up, so as to be almost entirely protected against famine. 3. The corn trade with the heathen countries was precluded. 4. The leisure from all material and external occupations must necessarily have given a greater impulse and scope to religious life; and therein lies, no doubt, the reason of the command concerning the public reading of the Law on the Feast of Tabernacles of the Sabbath-year. It exercised, therefore, the same salutary spiritual influence upon their minds as the weekly Sabbath, by freeing them from the harassing anxieties of everyday life; it was, in fact, like it, called “a Sabbath to the Lord” (Lev. xxv. 2); for it brought the nation freedom from that agricultural labour which was assigned to it as its ordinary occupation.—When the cycles of the Sabbath-year commenced, is uncertain; the Jewish authorities state, that they were first introduced fourteen years after the entrance of the Hebrews into Canaan; immediately after the distribution of the land, which like its conquest (Josh. xiv. 10), lasted, according to tradition, seven years. It is, however, known, that the Sabbath-year seems to have been almost entirely

neglected before the exile (2 Chron. xxxvi. 21, from which passage it has been concluded, that it was not observed during a period of about 500 years); but that it was really carried out after the return from the Babylonian captivity (Neh. x. 31). Thus the Sabbath-year had an ideal and practical signification: to keep in memory the inalienable sovereignty of God, and to promote the fertility of the land; and even if the latter object should have been the ulterior aim of Moses, he has, with his usual wisdom, admirably ennobled and spiritualized it.—As the jubilee is the natural and necessary development of the Sabbath and the Sabbath-year, it has been found strange, that it is here with no word alluded to; and this circumstance has been used as a proof that the Mosaic laws have a successive and gradual origin, and that the precepts concerning the jubilee have been added at a later period. But the sketch of the laws contained in ch. xxi. to xxiii. is not intended as a complete system incorporating all laws; it is a delineation of the fundamental precepts; and the only condition which can reasonably be demanded is, that none of the detailed laws later revealed should be at variance with those precepts; which can certainly not be asserted with regard to the Sabbath-year and the jubilee.

10. According to Ebn Ezra, Luzzato, and others, these laws are here only inserted on account of the benefits which they confer on the poor, the strangers, and the beasts. This may be the invisible thread by which those ordinances unfolded themselves in the mind of the inspired writer; but this did not prevent him from explaining them in their full meaning and signification.

11. It appears, from Lev. xxv. 7, that the proprietor is entitled, like all other persons, to the spontaneous growth

of thy handmaid, and the stranger may be refreshed.—13. And in all *things* which I have said to you be circumspect: and make no mention of the name of other gods; it shall not be heard out of thy mouth.—14. Three

of the seventh year: the land belongs then to all in common; and the original natural state of mankind, before the individual property was marked by limits and boundaries, was thus visibly represented. From the analogy of the jubilee (Lev. xxv. 9), we may infer, that the year of release was proclaimed on the Day of Atonement, or the tenth day of the seventh month, not in Abib; for after the completion of the harvest only perfect rest of the fields could take place; and in the eighth month the new agricultural labours were, in ordinary years, commenced.—Rashbam observes, that although here vineyards and oliveyards only are mentioned, the whole vegetation produced by human labour is included in our law.

12. See on the fourth commandment, xx. 8—11. It is, however, worthy of remark, that, as here the law of Sabbath is repeated in connection with the laws of humanity and charity, the obligation to permit, on the seventh day, complete rest to the servants, the strangers, and the animals also, is again enjoined. And

this is one of the features of the laws of Sabbath, in which it is distinguished from similar institutions of other nations. Cato Censorius pronounces even the contrary principle: "For mules, horses, and asses, there are no rest-days." The Sabbath is indeed, the image of the whole Mosaic faith; it mirrors forth all the other precepts of the Law; its aim is sanctity, spirituality, charity, and love; knowledge of God and meditation on His revealed truths—and the same was the inward tendency of the Mosaic religion; it was the perfect separation from paganism, the opposition of materialism, and the abnegation of selfishness in favour of brotherly love; and we here, therefore, remind the reader of Montesquien's pertinent remark: "Quoique tous les états aient en général un même objet qui est de se maintenir, chaque état en a pour tant un qui lui est particulier. L'aggrandissement était l'objet de Rome, la guerre celui de Lacédémone, la Religion celui des Loix Judaïques" (De l'Esprit des Loix xi. 5).

33. PROHIBITION NOT TO MENTION THE NAMES OF IDOLS. VER. 13.

The importance of the Sabbath induces the legislator to add a general admonition to the observance of the divine commandments; and he does this with the greater propriety, as the end of the Sabbath is the inculcation and study of the Law. In order to eradicate idolatry, with all its far-spreading roots, the idols shall not only be banished from the hearts, but also from the lips; they should not even be alluded to or mentioned, much less be worshipped. And as it was for-

bidden to use the name of God falsely or disrespectfully (xx. 7; xxii. 27), thus the heathen deities should entirely disappear from the language. The Jewish interpreters, Rashi, Ebn Ezra, as also Jerome, translate: "You shall not swear by the name of the idols;" others interpret: "You shall not give occasion to a heathen even to use the name of an idol for an oath." This sense is, however, not contained in our words.

34. THE THREE PRINCIPAL FESTIVALS. VERS. 14—17.

Although Passover has predominantly a national and historical meaning, it stands yet evidently in relation with the great epochs of the agricultural year, and is therefore internally connected with

Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles. On the first day of Passover the ripe firstling-sheaf was offered by the priest (Lev. xxiii. 10, 11; see *supra*, p. 137); then the corn-harvest commenced with

times thou shalt celebrate a feast to me in the year.
 15. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I have com-

the ingathering of the barley, which was followed by that of the wheat crops; and within the seven weeks between Passover and Pentecost the harvest was finished, so that, on the latter festival, shew-bread, baked from the new corn, was offered on the altar. Hence is explicable the designation "Festival of Conclusion," which was later attributed to Pentecost; it is the termination of the Passover; the harvest, commenced in the first month, was considered as finished in the third; and in this sense Philo (Opp. ii. 294) calls the Passover "the forerunner of another greater festival." About the autumnal equinox, the fruits, the grapes and olives, ripened. As a festival of thanksgiving for this last harvest of the year, the Feast of Tabernacles was instituted, with which the agricultural year was regarded as concluded, and after which the rainy season generally commenced. Thus in the three festivals of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, the whole cycle of the agricultural holy-days was completed; they were festivals of thanksgiving for the blessing which God had bestowed upon the seeds; and their solemnization, the pilgrimages to the central sanctuary and the offering of sacrifices, together with the celebration of social and convivial feasts, bore at once a religious and civil, a solemn and cheerful, character.

Undoubtedly these festivals contributed also considerably to cement the *political* unity of the Hebrew nation, and to prevent dangerous animosities and jealousies among the tribes. Without the common temple, at which the whole nation periodically assembled for sacred and joyful festivities, Israel would soon have been dismembered into a variety of small and weak states; it would thus have become an easy prey to the attacks of the powerful enemies around them, and the internal connection even would soon have been loosened and dissolved. That Jeroboam did not consider the separation of the ten

tribes secured as long as the people made pilgrimages to the temple of Jerusalem to participate in the common festivals, is a strong proof of the uniting influence of these grand institutions, and of their mighty effects upon the national character of the Israelites (1 Kings xii. 26—33). It might be urged, that these regular and obligatory pilgrimages imposed upon the nation considerable sacrifices, and involved both inconvenience and expense. However, these festivals were, by the legislator, invested with a sacred character; they were represented as one of the pillars of the theocratical constitution; every Israelite felt a strong impulse to meet at once his God and his brethren from all parts of the Holy Land; and who is so devoid of all religious sentiment as to consider religious institutions impracticable because they require pecuniary and personal exertions, and not to comprehend that a nation, the very centre of whose existence is religion, will cheerfully sacrifice every worldly advantage in order to satisfy a spiritual craving? It is natural, that the Israelites who lived in foreign countries, or in Palestine very distant from Jerusalem, did not attend in the temple every year on the three festivals, as it would have been impossible to make a double journey—from Jerusalem back, and to Jerusalem again—in the short interval between Passover and Pentecost. But pilgrimages to national sanctuaries were, at very early times, performed by different ancient nations. Those of the Arabs to Mecca are considered as old as the time of Abraham, who is even said himself to have made forty journeys to that city. The very Hebrew word, *Hag*, is identical with the Arabic *Hadj*. The parallel of the Mahommedan pilgrimages to Mecca assists us likewise to understand how the many thousands of guests could find room within the walls of Jerusalem. In Mecca, a town much smaller than Jerusalem

manded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt; and none shall appear before me empty: 16. And the feast of harvest,

was, arrive, on such occasions, more than fifty thousand strangers. "As for house-room, the inhabitants straiten themselves very much, in order at this time to make their market. As for such as come last, after the town is filled, they pitch their tents without the town, and there abide until they remove towards home. As for provision, they all bring sufficient with them, except it be of flesh, which they may have at Mecca; but all other provisions, as butter, honey, oil, olives, rice, biscuit, etc., they bring with them as much as will last through the wilderness, forward and backward, as well as the time they stay at Mecca; and so for their camels they bring store of provender, etc., with them" (Pitt). According to Herodotus (ii. 60), the Egyptians also celebrated, annually, common festivals, in appointed parts of the desert (see note on v. 1).

A. 15. About PASSOVER, and the laws connected with it, see notes to chapter xii. The words, *and none shall appear before me empty*, belong to all the three festivals, and must, therefore, not, as the English Version does, be included within parenthesis, like the precept concerning Passover. Modern commentators find in this command an analogy to the custom of Oriental nations, who were forbidden ever to appear before their kings without presents.

B. 16. The signification of PENTECOST is already evident from the different names which it bears: 1st. *the festival of the harvest*, in our passage, as then the harvest even of the later grains, as wheat, was considered as finished. 2nd. *The day of the first-fruits* (Numb. xxviii. 26), the day on which the first loaves made from the new corn were offered on the altar. 3rd. *The feast of weeks* (Deut. xvi. 10), because it was celebrated seven complete weeks, or fifty days after Passover (ver. 9), and thence the Greek name *Pentecost*, the fiftieth day. Jewish tradition calls the festival also *the time of the*

giving of our laws, asserting that, on this day, the sixth of the third month, the revelation of the decalogue took place (see on xix. 2); and calls further Pentecost, figuratively, festival of conclusion, since it completed, spiritually, that which Passover or the redemption from Egypt had commenced: for liberty without the divine laws would have been imperfect and useless (see, however, *supra* on vers. 14—17). But, even Philo makes no mention of the meaning of Pentecost as the festival of legislation, although this is, of course, the only one at present attributed to it by the Jews, as it can have for them no importance as the festival of the harvest.

The principal passages treating of our festival are, Lev. xxiii. 15—22; Numb. xxviii. 26—31; Deut. xvi. 9—12; and we learn therefrom: 1st. Pentecost was to be celebrated on the fiftieth day after the first day of holy convocation of Passover, that is, fifty days after the sixteenth of Nisan. This is evidently the sense of the words, "from the morrow after the Sabbath" in Levit. xxiii. 15; for the first and seventh day of Passover are Sabbaths, days of rest, they are "holy convocations, no work shall be done thereon" (vers. 7, 8, compare ver. 39). Further, the text in ver. 15, qualifies the word Sabbath more accurately, by adding: "from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering," and this was done according to ver. 11, on the sixteenth day of Nisan. And thus writes Josephus: "On the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth day of the month" the first-fruits were offered in the temple, in the manner described, p. 137, and, "when a week of weeks has passed *after this sacrifice* (which weeks contain 49 days), on the fiftieth day is Pentecost." This natural interpretation, adopted by Jewish tradition, has been rejected by some sects, as the Sadducees and Karaites, who take "the morrow after the Sabbath" for the

the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in thy fields: and the feast of ingathering at the end of the year,

day after the weekly-Sabbath in the week of Passover, and, therefore, celebrate Pentecost always on a Sunday. Still less acceptable is the opinion, that those words signify the day after the *conclusion* of the Passover, which always began with a Sunday, and the seventh day of which was therefore a Sabbath; for it is the conjecture of some critics, that at the beginning of the year new weeks always were commenced, so that the seventh, fourteenth, and twenty-first of Abib were Sabbaths. But this interpretation not only rests on entirely unsupported suppositions, but the offering of the firstling-sheaf would, thus, literally take place after the festival, whereas that ceremony was an integral part of the Passover rites themselves. 2nd. On Pentecost two leavened shew-breads from the new corn were offered, each containing one-tenth of an ephah of flour (Levit. xxiii. 16, 17). The expression "from your habitations you shall bring them," has not been understood, by the Hebrew tradition, to mean that every Israelite was to bring two loaves, but that two were presented in all, in the name of the whole people, just as one firstling-sheaf was offered on Passover. But it was enjoined as a duty incumbent on every individual, to offer voluntary gifts according to his ability (Deut. xvi. 10). After these loaves had been presented on the altar, with the rite of *waving*, they were (two or three days later) given over for food to the priests, who were not permitted to leave anything over till the following day. 3rd. As sacrifices were to be offered, according to Levit. xxiii. 18, 19, seven lambs of the first year, one bullock, and two rams, with the necessary meat-, and drink-, offering; a kid of the goats as an expiation for sins, and two lambs of the first year, for a peace-offering. But, in Numbers xxviii. 27—31, are prescribed two bullocks, one ram, seven lambs of the first year, with the meat-, drink-, and expiatory offerings. This discrepancy of the numbers has been

reconciled by Jewish tradition by the conjecture that the passage in Leviticus treats of the sacrifice which was to be connected with the oblation of the shew-bread; but that in Numbers, of the additional sacrifice; and Josephus also adds the numbers of both passages, stating, as the required sacrifices: three bullocks for a burnt-offering, and three rams, and fourteen lambs, with two kids of the goats, as an expiation for sins. These sacrifices were also to be offered with the "rite of waving" over the firstling-bread (Levit. xxiii. 20). 4th. The day was celebrated as a "holy convocation," and every kind of labour was interdicted (ver. 21; Numb. xxviii. 26); it was a festival of joy, which all, even the servants and strangers, should equally share (Deut. xvi. 11), and which was chiefly celebrated by common repasts, and probably with dances and public games. We have historical evidence that this beautiful festival, which falls in the most lovely season of the year, was, even in the time after the exile, cheerfully and universally solemnized.

C. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES was celebrated from the fifteenth day of the seventh month Tishri, "when the season of the year is changing for winter," during seven days. The principal passages concerning this festival are: Levit. xxiii. 33—43; Numb. xxix. 12—39; Deut. xvi. 13—15. Herefrom we gather the following data: 1st. The festival is to be observed as a time of joy on account of the ingathering of the fruits and the perfectly finished harvest; for it marked the end of the agricultural year. 2nd. As, therefore, the people were, for the current year, relieved from all labour and all care, it could freely abandon itself to joy (Deut. xvi. 15); and in these pleasures also all the members of the community should equally participate. 3rd. As the Passover was both an agricultural and a historical festival (see on ver. 14—17), so the Feast of Tabernacles was also connected with the

when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of thy field:
17. Three times in the year all thy males shall appear

remembrance of the benign guidance with which God protected Israel in the desert; and it was therefore commanded, that every Israelite should, during the seven days of the festival, live in tabernacles, "that your generations may know that I have let the children of Israel dwell in tabernacles, when I brought them forth from the land of Egypt" (Levit. xxiii. 43); and that reminiscence could not be renewed in a more appropriate season than when the blessing of the land was safely stored up, and the rich produce of the past harvest allowed them a happy prospect into the following months of relaxation and repose. 4th. On the first day was a holy convocation, and a Sabbath, on which every work was to be suspended. 5th. The eighth day after it was also a holy convocation, and a Sabbath, and is simply called, "festive assembly." The days between the second and eighth day were probably, like the middle days of Passover, passed in public amusements, especially dancing. Michaelis conjectures, that a sort of general fair was held, where the visitors from all parts of the country exhibited their wares for sale; and he compares herewith, not inappropriately, the origin of the modern commercial "masses" from the religious masses. 6th. The Israelites shall take on the first day "the fruit of a beautiful tree, branches of palm-trees, and the boughs of a thick-leaved tree, and willows of the brook," and rejoice before God seven days (Levit. xxiii. 40). This obscure precept has been understood by some sects, as the Karaites and Sadducees, to mean, that those boughs and fruits are to be applied to the adornment of the tabernacles. This conception seems to be countenanced by Nehem. viii. 15, 16, where at least two of those plants—the palm-tree, and the "thick-leaved trees"—are clearly mentioned as necessary for the construction of the tabernacles, *as has been prescribed*. But Jewish tradition commanded, that the pilgrims should

take a citron in their left hands, and a bough of the palm-tree surrounded by willows and myrtles in their right hands, and carry them, during the service in the temple, as symbols of the manifold productions of nature. 7th. The sacrifices in the temple were extremely numerous: on the first day the burnt-offering was to consist of a sacrifice of thirteen bullocks, fourteen lambs, fifteen rams; and a kid of the goats, as an expiation for sins, with the meat-, and drink-, offering; and on the following days the same number of lambs and of rams, with the kid of the goats, but abating one of the bulls every day till they were reduced to seven only (Numb. xix. 12—39). This distinction in the character of the sacrifices, imparted to the festival a peculiar dignity, and it is called by Josephus and Philo, the holiest of all festivals. Hereto we add, that on the Feast of Tabernacles of every Sabbath-year, the Law was publicly read in the temple (Deut. xxxi. 10; see *supra*, p. 345). It is therefore not surprising, that Jewish tradition developed the laws concerning this festival with extraordinary predilection, and compiled very complicated rituals concerning the construction of the tabernacles, the four kinds of fruits.—According to Nehem. viii. 17, the Feast of Tabernacles was, before the exile, not legally celebrated by the Israelites. It is interesting to read the description of this festival given by Plutarch, who finds it perfectly analogous to the Greek Bacchic festivals, believes the branch of the palm-tree to be a thyrsus, and mentions the Levites, whom he believes to have been called so either from "Lysius," or, Enius! which latter statement must be very perplexing for those who think Plutarch to have been deeply and thoroughly versed in Biblical literature (see on ii. 4).—*At the end of the year*; that is, when another year has commenced; for the new labours of the field were begun in the eighth month, or, as Mendelssohn explains: "after the year is finished, and

before the Lord God.—18. Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread: neither shall the fat

a new year has commenced." In xxxiv. 22, "the circuit of the year" is used synonymously with the expression of our verse.

17. Rashbam finds in the phrase: "before the Lord God," an allusion to the promise later given by God in the parallel passage xxxiv. 21—26: "neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou wilt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year" (ver. 24). If indeed the Israelites celebrated their seven and eight days' festivals of Passover and Tabernacles conscientiously and in accordance with the Mosaic precepts, which command every male Israelite to attend in Jerusalem, it is certainly an extraordinary fact, that the numerous and so inveterate enemies of the Israelites did not avail themselves of these times of defencelessness, to invade and to subdue the provinces. But it appears from the passage of Nehemiah above quoted, and from other evidences, that before the exile these festivals were not very scrupulously observed; and concerning the time after the exile, the historical accounts are defective. Our text enjoins too distinctly that every year all male Israelites shall appear before God, to admit the supposition, that not the attendance of all Hebrews in the same year was required, or that in the Sabbath-year the concourse of the people was greater; or that the whole nation was *represented through the elders* (compare *supra*, p. 348). — Rosenmüller observes correctly: "This belonged necessarily to a theocratical constitution. God is considered as the king, and the subjects assemble thrice every year to do Him homage"; and similarly Mendelssohn: "He is the lord and proprietor of the land; therefore shalt thou, at appointed times, appear before Him like a servant before his master, and shalt offer Him presents as a mark of thy loyalty and allegiance."

Let us, with a few words, recapitulate once more the tendency and meaning of

the "three festivals." Passover is the commencement of the harvest; seven weeks ensue, which by their very number are marked as holy; then follows the day of conclusion, or Pentecost, which, as the culminating point of harvest, can possibly only last one day, not seven days like the two corresponding festivals. The time of the harvest is, therefore, sacred, devoted to God; it reminded incessantly that the blessing of the land, that every nourishment and support comes from Him alone; and thus, in the midst of the gathering of material property, the religious doctrines of faith and humility were kept alive; and, in the midst of the lavish gifts of nature, the thoughts were directed to the God of Israel, who had, in Egypt, so obviously proved Himself as the Lord of nature, and the omnipotent sovereign of the world, by the redemption of His people. The bread which was offered on Pentecost, was of wheat, whilst the firstling-sheaf of Passover was barley; for the harvest was finished; all crops were gathered in; and the offering of God was naturally of the best and choicest grain. That bread was leavened, because it represented the daily, ordinary food; it was not the raw material, it was the prepared food itself, from an analogous reason; *two* loaves were presented, accompanied by *two* lambs (whilst on Passover *one* sheaf and *one* lamb were offered), because the happy conclusion of the harvest was necessarily marked by a greater gift of gratitude than its commencement. The lambs were, on Pentecost, sacrificed as a eucharistic offering, not as a holocaust, as on Passover,—for Pentecost was in its nature and tendency a festival of thanks and rejoicing.—In an internal historical relation with Passover stands the Feast of Tabernacles; the one created Israel as a nation, the other symbolizes its preservation; in the one, God showed Himself as the rescuer of Israel, in the other as their permanent king; the one represents His

of my festival *sacrifice* remain until the morning.—
19. The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring

justice and omnipotence, the other His providence and love; the one exhorts to grateful adoration, the other to unshaken belief; and this belief is typified by living eight days in moveable, frail, and unsafe tabernacles—at once a remembrance of past protection and help, and an emblem of the eternal confidence in His grace and His faithful guidance. And thus the Feast of Tabernacles is, from another point of view, also a festival of covenant both between God and every individual Israelite, and between God and Israel, as His people; all the Mosaic festivals emanate systematically from the same sublime ideas of sanctity and truth. But externally also, with regard to the produce of the soil, the Feast of Tabernacles is connected with the two other festivals. It marks the perfect conclusion of the agricultural year; not the corn only which belongs to the necessities of life, but the fruits also, and wine and oil, which serve for the cheerfulness, the enjoyment and recreation of life, were gathered in; the whole abundance of the year could be overlooked; the Feast of Tabernacles recalled likewise the remembrance of Pentecost, which again reminded of Passover (Deut. xvi. 13); thus the former included, as it were, the two other

festivals; both its character was more cheerful, and its tendency was larger and more comprehensive; and hence the names are explicable, with which it was designated as the greatest of all festivals, as the festival *κατ' ἑξοχὴν* (see p. 351); and the multiplied sacrifices, which consisted of seventy bullocks, and of two rams and fourteen lambs daily; the number seventy (being seven multiplied by ten) is not accidental; and the circumstance, that on the last day *seven* bullocks were sacrificed, is not insignificant.—And whilst the thankful mind regarded the results of the labour of the year, it was, in general, reminded of the providence of God, which rules over centuries and nations with the same love with which it has watched over the short space of one civil year, and over the activity of one individual. Thus meet the external and internal significations of this beautiful festival. The very tabernacles represent those two ideas; their construction shows the unbounded confidence in God, and their materials represent the gifts of God, the rewarded and justified faith (see *Baumgarten*, Comm. I. ii. 42, *et seq.*; *Baehr*, Symb. ii. p. 645—664).

35. SUPPLEMENTARY LAW ABOUT THE PASCHAL SACRIFICE. VER. 18.

The celebration of Passover began with the solemn offering of the paschal-lamb; after this introductory ritual, the holy festival was considered as fully commenced; and it was consequently necessary, to remove everything leavened *before* the killing of the lamb, and thence the precept: "*thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread*"; that is, whilst leavened bread is still in your houses. And as the paschal-lamb was a symbol of the national cove-

nant between God and Israel, and as it was to be consumed as a *whole* by the *whole* congregation (xii. 3, 6, 9), it was neither allowed to leave any part of its flesh till the morning (xii. 10), nor of its fat; for the one was the portion of the Israelites, the other that of God; wherefore Moses ordains: "neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning."

19. First part. On the offering of the first fruits, see note to xxii. 28, 29.

36. THE LAW ABOUT THE "KID AND THE MILK OF ITS MOTHER." VER. 19; SECOND PART.

Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk. The meaning and tend-

ency of this remarkable law, which is repeated three times (xxxiv. 26;

into the house of the Lord thy God.—Thou shalt not see the kid in its mother's milk.—20. Behold, I send ¹a

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—An angel.

Deut. xiv. 21) can only be ascertained from the context, in which it is introduced. In our passage and in Deut. xxxiv. 26, it follows immediately after the precept concerning the offering of firstling-fruits; and it must, therefore, no doubt stand in some relation to the products of agriculture. This simple consideration leads us to certain accounts, calculated to spread some light over this obscure precept. Ancient interpreters already, as the Karaites, inform us that it was customary among heathen nations, after all fruits had been gathered in, to choose a kid; to boil it in the milk of its mother, and then to sprinkle this milk, under mysterious rites, upon their trees, fields, gardens, and orchards, in the belief, that they became thereby more fertile, and that they would, in the ensuing year, yield a more abundant produce. And most probably, in order to destroy among the Israelites this pagan custom, that law was enjoined; for firstling-fruits of fields, which had by that ceremonial received fictitious fertility, and which had thus become objects of superstitious practices, were an abomination to the Lord.

Abarbanel mentions a similar custom even in the Occident, for instance, in Spain and England; he writes: "It is the custom in the kingdom of Spain, to this very day, that all shepherds assemble twice every year to deliberate on their affairs, and to stipulate laws concerning their cattle when they kill young animals, boil them, etc., and I learnt as an authentic fact, that the same custom prevails in that distant isle called England." And Clericus compares with this law the custom, that among many ancient nations a kid or a goat was sacrificed to Bacchus, because nothing is more injurious to the vine than their bite; it was therefore not impossible that similar notions prevailed among the tribes which surrounded the Israelites, and that a law forbid-

ding such perverse customs was thus necessary.

But further, in Deut. xiv. 21, that prohibition follows after the laws concerning the allowed and forbidden food; however, the general principle of the prohibition against the use of any flesh of torn beasts, is added: for "thou art a holy nation to the Lord thy God; thou shalt not see the kid in the milk of its mother." We are almost compelled by this connection of "the holy nation" with our prohibition, to recognise in the latter a direct moral meaning, since the holiness generally includes a refinement of manners and ennoblement of moral sentiments. And this reason is adduced by many ancient interpreters. Abarbanel remarks: "the principal end of this law is to prevent unfeeling cruelty," and it is in this respect analogous to the precept, not to kill a beast and its mother on the same day (Lev. xxii. 28). Ebn Ezra observes: "It is needless for us to search the reason of that prohibition, for it is concealed from the eyes of even the wise; but perhaps it was enjoined, because it is a cruelty to see the kid with the milk of its mother" (compare *Rashbam*; but even Mendelssohn considered the attempt of searching after the reason of this law as a hopeless toil: "the benefit arising from the many inexplicable laws of God is in their practice, not in the understanding of their motives; it must suffice for us to know, that they are of divine origin"). And it appears cruel indeed, and hard-hearted almost to mockery, to see the young animal in that very milk, which nature had destined to its own nourishment. But travellers report, that even at present the Arabs do not boil their meat in water, but in sour milk (*Labbin*). Maimonides considers it objectionable in a sanitary point of view: "As to the prohibition, not to eat meat boiled in milk, we are of opinion, that such meat

messenger before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. 21. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he

is too compact a food, which engenders surfeit." But he adds also the conjecture, that this law was intended to prevent some pagan rite.—That *kid* stands here for every eatable, pure mammal generally, is self-evident, as similarly in xxi. 35, ox, in xxiii. 5, ass, etc.; Ebn Ezra and Abarbanel explain: "let not the young firstling-fetus grow up by the milk of the mother, but sacrifice it to God on the eighth day after its birth" (xxii. 29); which is incompatible with the Hebrew text.—The very artificial conjecture of Michaelis is now, we believe, universally discarded. He takes "its mother" generally, as sheep, or any other animal, and believes, that Moses intended to forbid roasting and boiling with *milk*, and to accustom the Israelites to the use of olive-oil, which abounded in Palestine; thus they would perceive the superiority of the Holy Land over Egypt, and never be tempted to return again thither. It is certainly a novel legislative experiment, to strengthen patriotism by the aid of the culinary art. Luther translates: "thou shalt not see the kid whilst it is still sucking its mother's milk." If our law applies to sacrifices or to firstlings, it would coincide with Levit. xxii. 27; if to other animals, it would be a mere sanitary precept. "We know no more," says Ewald (Antiq. p. 223), "by what revolting sight this prohibition may have been called forth, but evidently that phrase became a kind of memorial by which Israel should always be reminded of that tender mildness and considerate humanity which was to distinguish it from the barbarous nations. As such a pithy dictum this sentence concludes the whole series of laws in the *Book of the Covenant*, and is in perfectly the same manner repeated in later groups of laws; Exod. xxxiv. 26; Deut. xiv. 21; compare Levit. xxii. 28; Deut. xxii. 6, *et seq.*" It is well known that Jewish tradition found, in the words of our text, a

general prohibition against eating meat and milk together in any way or form whatever, and applied the threefold repetition of the law to the interdiction of eating, profit or advantage, and cooking. The Talmud has devoted considerable sections to all possible consequences of this interpretation of the law, which was likewise extended to birds (see Chulin, viii; Sanhedr. iv). That other Asiatic tribes do not know such law or custom, is, for instance, testified by Layard (Discoveries, p. 289): "The dish usually seen in a Bedouin tent is a mass of boiled meat, sometimes mixed with onions, upon which a lump of fresh butter is placed and allowed to melt."

20—23. The sketch of the fundamental laws is concluded; the most necessary moral, religious, and civil precepts have been enjoined, and the little and original "Book of the Covenant" (xxiv. 6) is completed (see p. 286). Very appropriately, exhortations are added, faithfully to adhere to these laws; and, as rewards, are promised, the special providence of God, the safe guidance to the Holy Land, and the destruction of the enemies. The latter part of our chapter forms a suitable resting-point in the progress of the specification of the legal injunctions. The decalogue is the embryo or the innermost kernel of the legislation; in always larger circles and always richer development, the divine precepts unfold themselves from this germ. First a summary (the decalogue); then an outline (chaps. xxi—xxiii); and then only the whole and complete system of the legislation in its minutest detail. So lucid is this arrangement of the sacred materials, that about the *leading ideas* of the most special laws no uncertainty, no doubt, is possible; and so systematical is the gradual progress, that it must be intelligible for the most ordinary comprehension.

will not pardon your transgressions; for my name *is* in him. 22. ¹For if thou wilt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy to thy enemies, and an adversary to thy adversaries. 23. For my ²messenger shall go before thee, and bring thee to the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—But.

² Angel.

The promises of God, after the promulgation of this outline of the theocratic laws, are: He will be the enemy of Israel's enemies (ver. 22); He will strike them with consternation and terror (ver. 27), and confound them even by the terrors of nature (ver. 28); He will lead His people by a messenger into the Holy Land, and will there also destroy their enemies (vers. 20, 23), not at once and suddenly, but gradually (vers. 29, 30); and He will extend their territory in the south to the Red Sea, and in the east to the Euphrates (ver. 31); lastly, they will always enjoy an abundance of provisions, be exempted from disease and pestilence (ver. 25), reach a vigorous old age, and increase uninterruptedly (ver. 26).—But, on the other hand, the conditions of all these blessings are, that they faithfully and willingly follow the divine messenger (ver. 21), and serve God (ver. 25), never worship the heathen idols, but destroy them everywhere (ver. 24), not conclude an alliance with the heathens themselves (ver. 32), and even not allow them to live in their midst, as they would be seduced by them to idolatry, and thus be led to their inevitable ruin (ver. 33).

20. *Behold I send a messenger before thee.* It may naturally be expected that on the meaning of the messenger, whom God promised to send as a guide for the Israelites, the most dissenting opinions have been proposed. Some see in him the Son of God, who is identical with God (compare 1 Corinth. x. 9); but, from Exod. xxxiii. 2, 3, it is perfectly evident, that the messenger and God are *different* beings: God promises to expel the enemies by a messenger; He will Himself not go with the Israelites; for it cannot be admitted, that the "messenger" of our passage

is different from that mentioned in xxxiii. 2. Others (Herder, Rosenmüller, Vater) understand by messenger here, the pillar of fire and of cloud, which is, indeed, in xiv. 19, also called "the angel of God." But the pillars are only symbols of divine providence, and precede the Israelites to lead them through the trackless desert: how can we apply to them expressions like: "Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions"? (ver. 21). The pillars are tacit guides of the marches of Israel; to issue commands, or to punish disobedience, is certainly contrary to their nature (see note on xiii. 21, 22). The remark of Vater, "that from the pillar of cloud the commands of God proceed," proves nothing for the obedience due to the pillar itself; the place where a being dwells is not identical with that being. Others take "messenger" as God Himself, or His *providence*; but the expression, "*I send a messenger*," proves that it is not God Himself; and the words of the twenty-first verse, just quoted, show, that no abstract notion, but a concrete visible being is spoken of. The same must be objected to "the Torah or the ark of the covenant," which others have understood. Even the beautiful idea which Philippon finds in our words, "that Israel advances and flourishes under the special and immediate guidance of God, whilst the destinies of other nations are dependent on the concatenation of external events happening after His plan," even this idea lies too far from the simple tenor of our text. We are, therefore, compelled to take here the word messenger in its literal meaning, and to refer it to Moses and his successor Joshua, who are, in more

Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will destroy them. 24. Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor ³be induced to serve them, nor do after their works; but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite

³ *Engl. Vers.*—Serve.

than one passage, called the messengers of God. The expression "messenger" is, elsewhere, also used for prophet (Hagg. i. 13; Mal. iii. 1), priest (Eccles. v. 5; Mal. ii. 7), and, once, even the people of Israel, "which is the messenger of God and the teacher of the nations" (Isa. xlii. 19). But God's messengers are, as His representatives, filled with a heavenly spirit; God speaks through them (ver. 22); His name is in them (ver. 21); therefore the commands, "Obey the voice of my messenger," and, "Do all that I shall say," are identical (ver. 22); for elsewhere also God and His messenger are introduced promiscuously (see note to iii. 4; compare xxxiii. 2). Only about the time of the Babylonian exile, when, by the influence of the Chaldean dogmas of Zoroaster, the angelology was very considerably enlarged, the angels appeared as personal beings different from God; they then became the mediators between man and God, and were no more identified with God. Therefore the opinion of the Jewish commentators is also questionable, who understand here a *real* angel; some the *Metatron*, others *Michael*, after an uncertain allusion in Dan. x. 13. Refractoriness against God's messenger is equivalent to disobedience to God Himself; and dissatisfaction of the former will call down the wrath of the latter (ver. 21). Thus the messenger of God has certainly "divine qualities," but only in so far as He fulfils His mission as the divine delegate, just as the prophets are the mouth of God in their *inspired* effusions, but not in all other relations.—From the preceding remarks, the impropriety of the question is obvious, why God promises to lead the Israelites through a messenger rather than person-

ally? Some allege, because God foresaw the sins of the golden calf (xxxiii. 3); others, "because Israel might easily profane God's presence, and thus load great sins upon themselves." But the messenger and God are *virtually* identical; the former is the representative of the latter; Providence requires a concrete personification, and this is "the man of God," Moses.

21. As the messenger acts in the name of God, obedience to His commands is a godly duty, and obstinacy will find no pardon, which *he* has no power to promise and which *I* shall not grant.

23. About the nations here enumerated, see notes on iii. 8, and xiii. 5. The messenger will guide the Israelites, but God Himself will destroy the enemies.

24. As after the decalogue (xx. 20), here also the prohibition of idolatry is prominently repeated, since the pure undefiled monotheism constitutes the whole basis of the divine covenant with Israel (see note on xx. 3—6); and Ebn Ezra expresses this idea vigorously thus: "At the beginning of the *Book of the Covenant*, God warned the Israelites against idolatry; and, at its conclusion, He repeats the same admonition..... but there is this difference, that at the beginning God merely prohibited the making of any gods of silver or gold besides Himself, whilst, at the end, He ordered them to destroy all idols which they would find in the land of Canaan, and which the former inhabitants had made; for the idolator is like one who trespasses against all the prohibitions of the Law; and all his positive acts of righteousness are of no avail to him, either in this or in the future world." Israel's vocation is its opposition to paganism; and the culminating

break down their images. 25. And you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless thy bread, and thy water: and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.—26. There shall ¹ be no aborting, nor barren woman in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfil. 27. I will send my fear before thee, and will ² confound all the people to whom thou wilt come, and I will make all thy enemies turn their backs to thee. 28. And I shall send hornets before thee, which will drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before thee.—29. I shall

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Nothing cast their young, nor be barren.

² Destroy.

point of this opposition is the majesty and omnipotence of God compared with the vanity of the pagan deities.

25. The blessing will consist in abundance of the necessities of life and vigorous health. It is well known that the eastern nations are sparing in the use of flesh; bread forms their principal food; and hence the comprehensive meaning of this word in Hebrew; and travellers inform us that three persons in four live entirely upon it, or upon such compositions as are made of barley or wheat flour; see xv. 26. Ebn Ezra proves metaphysically and psychologically, that, as the observance of the divine behests secures to the mind the government over the passions of the physical man, health and long life are the natural consequences of piety.

26. The abundance of children which is here promised, secures permanence to Israel as a nation, whilst longevity is the immediate reward of the individual; but for the Israelite who lived with his hopes and his longings in the future, both blessings are equally important.

27. About the fulfilment of the assurance here given, see Josh. ii. 9—11.

28. As God promised to Israel (ver. 20), that He would send "His messenger" to assist them, so He threatens the enemies that He will send *hornets* to destroy them. According to this analogy, Augustin and others who understand messenger there as angel, take here hornet

as demon, evil spirit, which deserves no refutation. The analogy of the preceding verse: "I will send my fear before thee," shows that "fear," and "hornets," have, in some respects, a synonymous meaning. Now, it must be admitted, that by hornets not only individuals have been dangerously injured, but whole armies have been seriously inconvenienced. But we need scarcely observe, that a systematic expulsion of the numerous hostile nations of Canaan by swarms of hornets, "without sword or bow" of the Israelites (Josh. xxiv. 12), would be one of the very greatest miracles, which would no doubt have been repeatedly dilated upon in the later historical accounts. But, on the one hand, except in that one passage in Joshua, we find no further mention of such a fact; and, on the other hand, we read, in all historical books of the Old Testament, how the Israelites conquer and destroy their enemies in the usual manner, by battles and pursuits. It will thus be easy to arrive at an opinion concerning the dispute of the Talmud (in Sotah 36 a), whether one or two armies of hornets accompanied the Israelites; whether they preceded only Moses to the Jordan, or whether they followed Joshua also beyond it, etc. We must, therefore, understand "hornets" metaphorically, as any plague or punishment which God will inflict upon the enemies, in order to deliver them up the easier into the hands of the Israelites.

not drive them out before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beasts of the field multiply against thee. 30. By little and little I shall drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and wilt inherit the land. 31. And I shall set thy boundaries from the Red Sea even to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the desert to the river: for I shall deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out from before thee. 32. Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. 33. They shall not

29, 30. The expulsion of the hostile tribes has been promised; but it is a new proof of the divine love, that this expulsion was not to take place suddenly and rapidly; for the Israelites were not yet numerous enough to fill the whole extensive land, which was to be their inheritance (ver. 31); the population would, in many parts, be so scanty, that the wild beasts would spread there, and cause serious devastations. Therefore the conquest of the land would be effected gradually till the number of the people would have adequately increased.

31. The ideal extent of the promised land will be: from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, and from the Arabic desert to the Euphrates. It is obvious that these localities describe more the general extent of the country than its real limits, since Palestine itself is strictly not even included in them, and must be supplied from the enumeration of the tribes in ver. 23. Similar specifications of the boundaries were given already before in Gen. xv. 18, and were repeated later in Josh. i. 4. It is known, that these promises were only realized under David; and that the Israelites remained but for a short period in possession of so extensive a territory (compare 1 Kings v. 1—5).—David had already conquered Damascus (2 Sam. viii. 6) and subjected Syria; but Solomon possessed Eziongeber and Elath on the Red Sea (1 Chron. ix. 26;

2 Chron. viii. 17), fortified Hamath Zobah (probably Epiphania), built Tadmor, that is, Palmyra in the desert (2 Chron. viii.); his dominions extended even from Thipsah on the Euphrates (Thapsacus) to Gaza (1 Kings iv. 24; compare *Raumers* Palest. p. 23).

32, 33. So extremely anxious is the divine legislator for the exclusive and pure worship of God, that with judicious prudence, he forbids the Israelites, not only not to suffer the idols (ver. 24), nor to admit any association with them (ver. 32), but even to enter into any alliance with heathen nations, or to suffer them in their country, lest they should seduce them to serve their gods, and thus prove to them a snare of destruction: a precaution, which the whole later history of Israel proclaims as wise and indispensable. Compare Num. xxv. 1, 2. But we refer expressly to our notes on xxii. 20, from which it will appear, how little Moses intended an absolute and unconditional separation from all foreigners, and how admirably he, in this difficult point also, combined expediency and humanity. "A covenant is made with the gods, if they are honoured with divine veneration, and if in return their assistance is expected," observes Rosenmüller; but even the toleration of idols in the country is a kind of friendly union, tacitly admitting a certain legitimacy of their existence; and, in fact, a league with the heathens involves a covenant with the gods also,

dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me, 'if thou serve their gods, for it will surely be a snare to thee.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—For if.....it will.

since the pagans will naturally enter that compact under the condition only, that their gods be suffered and respected. Compare on ver. 24.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SUMMARY.—After God had commanded Moses, again to approach the mountain accompanied by Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and then to ascend it alone (vers. 12), he went down, communicated to the people all the laws "of the Book of the Covenant" (from xx. 19 to xxiii. 33); wrote them down; erected an altar and twelve pillars; offered holocausts and eucharistic sacrifices; sprinkled one part of the blood on the altar, and the other part on the people; read to them the Book of the Covenant, the stipulations of which they unanimously promised to observe (ver. 3—8). Then he went with his companions to the mountain; and all see, without danger, the appearance of God (vers. 9, 10, 11). Moses, then, on the repeated command of God, ascends the mountain, accompanied by Joshua, whilst the others remain behind to judge the people in their absence. Clouds covered the top of the mountain; six days Moses stood before it to prepare himself for his renewed communion with God; on the seventh day the Lord called him into the clouds, where he stayed forty days and forty nights in the divine presence (ver. 12—18).—On the farther connection of this chapter, see on ver. 1.

AND He said to Moses, Come up to the Lord, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and prostrate yourselves from afar.

1. To the fundamental laws, at the conclusion of the preceding chapter (ver. 20—33), the rewards had been added which would attend their faithful fulfilment, and thus the Book of the Covenant, with all its doctrines and conditions, was perfectly completed. Before any new progress in the specification of the divine laws can be made, the ratification of the covenant between God and Israel is now logically inserted. Not only were these recent revelations clearly written down by Moses, and an altar and twelve pillars erected according to the number of the twelve tribes (ver. 4); not only did the people willingly promise faithful obedience to these divine commands (vers. 3, 7); but sacrifices are killed, and their blood—the blood of the covenant—was sprinkled on the people (vers. 5, 6, 8). We must pause one moment at this im-

portant event. The whole history of Abraham and his descendants aimed and tended to this point. It was not sufficient that a *personal* covenant was, by God, concluded with that patriarch; that that covenant was renewed, on an enlarged basis, with Jacob as the representative of a *family*; and that it was, by the paschal rites, extended to a *national* convention. Mere political existence was not the only boon which God intended to bestow on Israel; he had decreed to select it as *His* people, as that nation which should worship Him as their eternal King. Liberty was the smallest portion of the divine favour towards Israel; 'Truth unfailing and beatifying crowned that independence; the blessing was not temporal, but spiritual; God promised to be ever near His people; and Israel pledged itself never to be faithless to its God. A higher

2. And Moses alone shall come near the Lord: but they shall not come near; neither shall the people go up with him.

climax in the internal connection between God and Israel was impossible; and the covenant related in these verses is, therefore, the last which the Old Testament specifies.

The connection of our chapter, which has been much disputed, is simply this: After the communication of the decalogue, Moses had again ascended the mountain (xx. 18); here God revealed to him the laws of the Book of the Covenant, from xx. 19 to xxiii. 33, whilst the people stood afar off (xx. 18); and, before He dismissed him, He ordered him to communicate these laws to the people, and then to appear again, with Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel (xxiv. 1), but so that he alone should really ascend the mountain, whilst the others and the people should remain at a distance (ver. 2). And so Moses did; he went down, and imparted to the people all the laws of God (ver. 3), and, after having ratified the covenant by a sacrifice, he went, with Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and the seventy elders, to the mountain (ver. 9); but God commanded that Moses alone, accompanied by Joshua, should go up (vers. 12, 13), whilst the others should await his return at the foot of the mountain (ver. 14). After six days of preparation, during which the glory of God covered the mountain in clouds, God called Moses to Himself; he ascended the mountain entirely, and remained in the clouds during forty days and forty nights (compare also on xix. 25). Thus all difficulties which have been found in the context disappear, and we only remark: 1. The first part of our verse is thus to be supplied: "And God said to Moses: Descend, communicate my laws to the people, and then come up again, with Aaron," etc., similar to xix. 24: "Go descend, and come up again." 2. That God speaks of Himself in the third person as in many other passages, as xix. 21; xx. 7, *et seq.* 3. The

transition from the addressed second person into the third (in ver. 2,) is also frequent, as, in fact, the use of the pronoun instead of the substantive is not yet quite general in the Pentateuch (see on ver. 2). 4. The first and second verses contain the conclusion of the divine communication to Moses after the decalogue, so that xx. 19 to xxiv. 2 belong closely together. 5. In ver. 9, we must not translate: *they went up the mountain*; for then the repeated command of God, that Moses shall come to Him on the mountain (ver. 12) would be superfluous; but it signifies only: *they went to the mountain*; from the foot of the mountain they saw the divine apparition; there they were to await the return of Moses (ver. 14), and to consume the sacrifices (ver. 11), whilst the people remained at a distance (xx. 15). 6. Joshua, as the servant of Moses, accompanied him up the mountain, without, however, entering with him into the cloud, which symbolized the presence of God (vers. 13, 16, 18). It is, therefore, perfectly inappropriate to consider the contents of verses 1 and 2 only as a repetition of xx. 15—18: "And God had spoken to Moses," so that the whole revelation, from xx. 19 to xxiii. 33, would lie between the second and third verse. Such violent dismemberments are absolutely against the harmonious simplicity of the Biblical narrative. Rashi, following some Talmudists, supposes even that the events of this chapter (to ver. 11) happened before the promulgation of the decalogue (the fourth of Nisan), and ought, therefore, to have been inserted before the twentieth chapter. But against this opinion Nachmanides has already forcibly observed, that, before the revelation, the expression, "*Book of the Covenant*" (ver. 7), would be unintelligible, as it is impossible to understand thereby the seven laws of Noah or the precepts given in Marah, or the contents of the

3. And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments, and all the people answered *with* one voice, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. 4. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and built an altar under the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. 5. And he sent the young men of the children of Israel, and they offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed thank-offerings of oxen to the Lord. 6. And Moses took half of the blood, and put *it* in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. 7. And he

Book of Genesis, which were at that time universally known, and needed, therefore, no new solemn ratification. Even Targum Jonathan adds in the text, that this communication to Moses took place on the seventh of Sivan, that is, on the day *after* the revelation. This is indubitably the correct view, which has likewise been adopted by several modern expositors. The Hebrew text mentions only the two eldest sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, as those who accompanied Moses; but the Samaritan codex adds here, and in ver. 9, from vi. 23, the two younger brothers, Eleazer and Ithamar. The seventy elders, here mentioned, are not that council, endowed with higher authority and filled with the divine spirit, which was later instituted (Num. xi. 16, 17) on the command of God; but they are the representatives of the Israelites, who shall, in their name, convince themselves of the truthfulness of the revelations of Moses by the sight of the divine majesty (vers. 10, 11).—About the elders in Egypt, and in the desert, see notes to iii. 16 and xviii. 21. And, since neither priests nor Levites, but elders from all the tribes, were chosen to witness that grand apparition, the priestly dignity of the whole people was again obvious (xix. 6).—*And prostrate yourselves from afar.* The elders came only to the foot of the mountain, but did not ascend the mountain itself. Geddes and Rosenmüller conjecture that the elders

ascended only the northern lower mount, Horeb, whereas Moses proceeded to the southern higher top of the Sinai. But such a difference is nowhere alluded to in our text; and if we admitted it, it would certainly be more appropriate to suppose, that the elders waited on the plain, formed by the separation of the two peaks after their elevation from a common base, on which at present the convent of Elijah stands (see p. 47). Compare xx. 15.

3. Moses descends from the mountain and reports to the people the legislation (xx. 19 to xxiii. 33); they promise ready obedience (ver. 7), as in xix. 8. The unanimity, with which the Israelites here pledge themselves to the divine worship, partakes of the sublime, and we willingly forget for a moment, how little they remained faithful to this promise, even in the time immediately following.

4. Ratification of the covenant, ver. 4—8. The altar is for God; the twelve pillars for Israel. A similar covenant by stones is mentioned in Gen. xxxi. 46.

5. About the sacrifices and the “young men of the children of Israel,” see notes to xviii. 12 and xix. 22. That common meals attended the conclusion of alliances from very early times appears from Gen. xxxi. 54; but this custom is here only the accidental basis; it is raised into a sacred action; the meals are converted into sacrifices.

6. One half of the blood was sprin-

took the Book of the Covenant, and read before the ear of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. 8. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you ¹on the condition of all these words.—9. Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: 10. And they saw the God of Israel: and *there was* under His feet ²like a work of pellucid sapphire, and ³like heaven itself in its clear-

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Concerning.

² As it were a paved work of a sapphire stone.

³ As it were the body of heaven.

kled on the altar consecrated to God, the other half on the Israelites (compare Gen. xv. 10). “And hence our doctors inferred, that our forefathers entered into the covenant by circumcision, and baptism, and sprinkling of blood; for there is no sprinkling without baptism” (*Rashi*, after the Talmud).

7. See ver. 3.—The ratification was not to proceed from the representatives, but from the mouth of the whole nation itself.

8. *The blood of the covenant*, is the blood, by the shedding of which a league is sanctioned. But the meaning of this rite seems to have been, that as the blood of the sacrifice was shed and sprinkled to all directions: in a similar manner the blood of him, who would break the alliance, was to be shed. Clericus compares herewith an analogous ceremony prevalent among the Romans in concluding treaties. For the feal priest, who ratified the treaty, spoke among others the following words, as Livy (i. 24) relates: “Hear, O Jupiter;..... that the Roman people will not, under any condition, first swerve from this treaty. If they first swerve by public concert, by wicked fraud; on that day do thou, O Jupiter, so strike the Roman people, as I shall here this day strike this beast; and do thou strike them so much the more, as thou art more able and more powerful, and the mightier and stronger thou art.” Compare *Rosenm.* ad hunc

loc.—Similarly Iliad iii. 298—301, the spilling of wine is symbolized:

“Hear, mighty Jove! and hear ye gods on high!

And may their blood, who first the league confound,

Shed like this wine, disdain the thirsty ground,” etc.

(*Pope's Translation*).

9. They went to the mountain (see on ver. 1).—It has been found surprising, that Joshua is here omitted, although, as is evident from ver. 13, he ascended with Moses; and it has been answered that Joshua was present neither in the name of the people nor for his own sake, but only as the attendant of Moses ready to execute the orders of the latter, or that he was among the seventy elders, and needed, therefore, not to be mentioned separately.

10. They saw the Lord, and under His feet it was like a work “of pellucid sapphire.” Our genuine sapphire, sky-blue, and harder than ruby is here meant. The sapphire of the ancients, probably the dark-blue not transparent lapis lazuli, lazure-stone, is neither appropriate in Job xxviii. 16—since it is not very precious—nor in Exod. xxviii. 18, as it was, according to Pliny, not applicable for sculptural purposes. It was, then, under the feet of the Lord “*like a work of pellucid sapphire*, such as the heaven can ever be seen in its utmost clearness and

ness. 11. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel He laid not His hand: so they saw God, and did eat and drink.—12. And the Lord said to Moses, Come up to me to the mountain, and be there: and I will give thee the tables of stone, ¹namely, the law and commandments, which I have written ²to teach them. 13. And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up to the mountain of God. 14. And to the elders he said, Remain here for us, until we return to you: and, behold, Aaron and Hur *are* with you: if any man has any cause, let him come to them. 15. And Moses went up to the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. 16. And

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And.

² That thou mayest teach them.

serenity," or as Targum Jerusalem paraphrases: "like a sky cleared from clouds." Onkelos, striving to avoid all anthropomorphic expressions with reference to God, translates: "And they saw the majesty of the God of Israel, and beneath it His majestic throne," and the Sept.: "they saw the place where God stood." In all these passages, the verbs *to see* and *to behold* must be understood as a reflection in the *mind*, but in no way as a real perceiving with the *eye*; for the eyes can only see corporeal things, and besides some qualities as the corporeal form and the like.

11. Although the elders saw God in His glory, He did not punish them; they remained uninjured, according to the popular belief, that nobody can see God and live (see note on iii. 5).—The words, "He laid not His hand," simple as they are, have been very differently interpreted. We adduce only Abarbanel's explanation: "the other elders (except the seventy) did not become participant of the divine vision"; and that of Rosenmüller (*Orient* ii. p. 88—90), who refers this expression to the custom of Oriental princes, to touch very respected persons with their hands, and to nod to others only slightly. Both expositions are arbitrary and against the spirit of our text.—*They saw God and did eat and drink*; they continued the sacrificial meal

of the Covenant with cheerful confidence; for the holocausts were sacrificed entirely, but the thank-offerings were consumed. Rabbi Jehuda Halevi, quoted by Ebn Ezra, remarks: "Although the elders had been permitted to behold the divine glory, they required physical food; and this is expressly mentioned, in order to show the superiority of Moses, who stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights without eating or drinking."—Onkelos thus paraphrases our verse: "And the princes of the children of Israel suffered no injury, although they had seen the glory of the Lord; and they were as rejoiced at their sacrifices, which had been favourably accepted, as if they had eaten and drunk": in which the latter part especially is freely rendered.

12. About the connection, see on ver. 1.

13. About Joshua, see note to ver. 9.

14. *We return*, namely, I and Joshua.—About Chur, see note on xvii. 10. The judicial disputes were naturally decided in the camp, not at the foot of the mountain, which was sacred; therefore, the sense of our verse is: return to the camp; but if you come back to meet us, do not proceed farther than to this place.

16. *And the cloud covered it*, namely, the mountain; not Moses, who was only six days later called into the cloud (compare ver. 18).

the glory of the Lord dwelt upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. [17. And the sight of the glory of the Lord *was* like devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel.] 18. And Moses went into the cloud, and ascended up into the mountain: and Moses was in the mountain forty days and forty nights.

17. About the appearance of God in fire, see note on iii. 2.—This verse is of parenthetical signification; for ver. 18 belongs immediately to ver. 16.

18. See xxxiv. 28: "And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread nor drink water." Compare Deut. ix. 9.

CHAPTER XXV.

INTRODUCTION.

The outlines of the divine legislation have been revealed to the redeemed people (xx.—xxiii.); a solemn covenant has been concluded on the basis of those fundamental laws (xxiv. 5—8); the immediate end of the deliverance from Egypt is attained. But an abstract delineation of a metaphysical religious system was not only insufficient for the mental condition of the Israelites, but would have offered very doubtful guarantees for a permanent observance. Now, pure and unadulterated monotheism was the corner-stone of the new religious edifice erected by Moses; it is so much its distinguishing feature, that the first tablet of the decalogue seems to aim exclusively at the injunction of that doctrine (see p. 253). It was therefore necessary, above all other considerations, to create a firm and visible centre of monotheism, to keep perpetually the idea of the one omnipotent God alive in the minds of the people, and so to exclude for ever a relapse into the pagan and idolatrous aberrations. Thus the erection of a holy portable tent as the abode of the Almighty, during Israel's wanderings, is commanded; God promises henceforth to dwell among His people, and to commune with His chosen servant, not from the cloud-covered mountain-peak, but from that visible place consecrated to His sanctity (xxix. 42—45; compare xv. 17). The elaborate detail with which the holy Tabernacle and all its various vessels are described, suffices alone to convince us of the great importance which the legislator attaches to these precepts; and, as most of the parts of which the sacred structure was composed have a significant symbolical meaning illustrative of the spiritual connection between God and Israel, it is not only important but highly interesting to obtain a clear and comprehensive picture thereof, both in its totality, and in its chief parts, by which the exposition and understanding of the next chapters will be materially facilitated and shortened.

THE HOLY TABERNACLE.

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE TABERNACLE.

It consisted of three distinct parts; the *Holy of Holies*, the *Sanctuary*, and the *Court*. The two former constituted the *Tabernacle* in its stricter sense, and were, at least externally, combined into one continuous structure. It was thirty cubits long, ten cubits broad, and as many cubits high, and formed therefore an oblong square; the longer sides were those which extended from east to west (xxvi. 18, 20).

It was made of *boards of acacia wood*, plated with gold, each of which was ten cubits long and one cubit and a half broad. The longer sides consisted therefore of twenty such boards, whilst the shorter (western) sides were to contain eight boards (xxvi. 25). But the latter would not cover a breadth of ten, but of twelve cubits. It is therefore added, that "six boards should be made for the side westward, and other two for the corners of the Tabernacle, in the two sides they shall be double, beneath and above and at the two corners" (vers. 22—24). From this obscure passage, it appears, in our opinion, that each board was half a cubit thick, so that six boards at the western side would completely close the tent from within (nine cubits added to the one half cubit at each side, being the thickness of the boards at the northern and southern wall); one half cubit breadth is double at each corner, and one cubit stands over at each side, for a purpose which will presently be obvious. We reject, therefore, all the various conjectures proposed to reconcile those two passages. Now the boards, in order to be fixed in the ground, were individually provided at the end with two symmetrically placed *tenons*, each of which fitted into a *socket* of silver, resembling, according to Josephus, the sharp end of a spear, so that the longer side of the tent had forty tenons and forty sockets; and the shorter sixteen tenons and sixteen sockets.

But only the northern, southern and western sides were in this way framed from wood. At the eastern side was the entrance, which was covered with a *curtain*, of blue, red, and crimson, and twined byssus, into which figures were embroidered. This curtain, which formed of course a square of ten cubits, was supported by five pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold, fixed by means of golden hooks, and five sockets of brass. The curtain was fastened to the pillars by golden *nails*.

The fifth side, or the ceiling of the Tabernacle, consisted of a costly covering composed of ten carpets or *curtains* of twined byssus, and blue, red, and crimson, with figures of the Cherubim interwoven. The length of each curtain was eight-and-twenty cubits; the breadth, four cubits; so that they covered a space of 1,120 square cubits. Five and five curtains were joined together; at the edge of the inner side of each of these two joined curtains, fifty purple *loops* were fastened, and these two rows of loops were joined by means of fifty golden hooks or *taches*.

It is the common opinion that this splendid covering of exquisite texture was like the other three coverings, which we shall describe, spread over the wooden frame so as to hang outside the boards. But, if this were the case, only 300 square cubits of that rich texture would have been visible at the ceiling of the tent, whilst the remaining 820, together with the images of the holy Cherubim represented thereon, would have been concealed by the following much inferior coverings, and thus nearly three-fourths of the costly stuffs, and the excellent workmanship would have been wasted. Besides, the sacred text seems clearly to distinguish this covering as that of the *Tabernacle* from the others, as those of the *tent over the Tabernacle*, compare xxvi. 1 and 7, 6, and 11; xl. 18, 19. Therefore Vater already (Pent. ii. p. 110) has thrown out the conjecture, that the first covering was suspended by small hooks within the boards, so that the inside of the Tabernacle was entirely covered with it. And this supposition has been raised to a certainty by the conclusive arguments with which Baehr (Symbol. i. p. 63—65) has supported it, and which Friederich (Symbol. p. 13) has in vain endeavoured to invalidate. Now as those curtains were twenty-eight cubits long, they covered, if spread over the breadth of the Tabernacle, the whole extent, except one cubit at each end (for to cover it *entirely* 10+10+10 cubits would have been required); and, as they were four cubits broad, the first five covered two-thirds of the tent (from the east, see *infra*), whilst one half of the remaining five was hung over the last third, and the other over the boards of the western side.

Then a covering of *goats' hair* was spread outside over the Tabernacle. It

was composed of eleven curtains, each thirty cubits long, and four cubits broad; six of these were joined together, and so also the other five; then these two pieces were fastened, like the internal covering, by means of loops and hooks; but the latter were of brass instead of gold. As the boards were half a cubit thick, these curtains also did not reach entirely to the ground, but half a cubit of the gilded boards remained uncovered on the northern and southern side; but not so at the western wall. For, in xxvi. 12, it is stated, that "the half curtain which remains of the curtains of the tent shall hang over the back-side of the Tabernacle"; and in ver. 13, "that a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side of that which remains in the length of the curtains, shall hang over the two sides of the Tabernacle." We must, therefore, suppose, that the loops and hooks lay the breadth of half a curtain (two cubits) more westward from those of the inner curtain; now, as the thickness of the double boards of the western side was one cubit, and of those of the eastern side, together with the pillars, on which the curtain was fastened, likewise one cubit; it follows, that there was one cubit overhanging at the eastern side over the gate, and one cubit at the western side, on the ground. According to Josephus (*loc. cit.*), that additional cubit was rolled up and used to serve as an ornamental elevation, or a kind of cornice over the gate.

Over this covering was a third of *rams' skins*, dyed red, and a fourth of *badgers' skins* (xxvi. 14), both of which were not only spread over the roof, but hang down at the sides as a protection against the injurious influences of the weather. But as the Tabernacle was to be carried by the Israelites during all their wanderings in the desert five golden rings were fastened at the outside of the boards of the three sides, and poles of acacia wood, covered with gold, were, like bars transversely passed through them. The "middle pole in the midst of the boards reached from end to end" (xxvi. 28); the other four were probably so arranged that two together reached over the whole side, so that, in all, three full bars were on each side. Thus the whole framework received, naturally, a greater consistency and compactness. If we add hereto that the coverings were fastened to the ground by means of tent-pins of brass, and, most probably, by cords, we have completed the delineation of the external framework of the Tabernacle.

But this structure was divided into two parts of a different degree of sanctity, by a splendid curtain, adorned with the images of the Cherubim, and suspended immediately under the loops and hooks of the first covering, so that the western part was ten, and the eastern twenty cubits long. The former is the Holy of Holies; the latter, the Sanctuary. This curtain also hung like that of the whole Tabernacle, on pillars of gilt acacia wood, but they were only four in number, fixed by means of hooks of gold and four sockets of silver. Golden nails were here likewise applied to fasten the curtain to the pillars.

A. THE HOLY OF HOLIES formed a perfect square, being ten cubits in length, and as many in breadth and height. The sacred furniture which it contained, was:

1. THE ARK, OR THE ARK OF THE COVENANT; also called "Ark of the Testimony;" or, the "Ark of the Lord." It was made of acacia wood, two cubits and a half long, one cubit and a half broad, and as high, plated with gold from within and from without. It had, therefore, the form of an oblong chest, probably provided with four small feet (see on xxv. 10—15). Round it was a border of pure gold, which encircled it like a crown. Baehr (*Symb. i. 377, 378*) endeavoured to prove that this crown was fixed round the *middle* of the ark; but his arguments are partly weak, partly fallacious.

For the purpose of transportation, the ark was provided with four rings at its four feet, two on each side; two gilded staves of acacia wood were passed through them—perhaps, at the longer sides—and were never removed from them; probably, that there might be no occasion to touch the holy vessel.

Into the ark, the two tables of the Law (called also, the Testimony) were put, and nothing more (see 1 Kings viii. 9). *Before* it, was placed an urn full of manna (see note to xvi. 33), and the blooming staff of Aaron (Num. xvii. 25), and, at its side, the Book of the Law (Deut. xxxi. 26).

2. THE MERCY-SEAT (in Hebrew, *Capporeth*) is one of the most important parts of the sacred implements; and the Holy of Holies is therefore called, in 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, *the house of the mercy-seat*. It was two cubits and a half long, and a cubit and a half broad (and, according to the Talmud, it was one hand-breadth thick); the former dimensions coincided, therefore, with those of the ark; but it was made of pure gold, not of acacia wood, and is thus distinctly different from the ark. It is, therefore, not merely the lid or cover of the ark, which, as we must necessarily suppose, had its proper cover of acacia wood; it is an independent and very momentous part of the Tabernacle; it is always enumerated as such, and not as a mere appendix to the ark; it is even more important than the ark itself (Lev. xvi. 2); and in xl. 20 it is distinctly stated, "that the *Capporeth* was put on the ark *over it*."

3. THE CHERUBIM.—On the mercy-seat, and forming one whole with it (xxv. 19), were two golden figures of the Cherubim, with their faces turned to each other, and looking down upon the *Capporeth*, and with their wings expanded over it. Their size is not stated, but they were probably not very large; neither is their form in any way described; they are mentioned as if they were objects generally known to the contemporaries of Moses. Jamieson accounts for this silence by the supposition, that the configuration of the Cherubs was, by tradition of the patriarchs, handed down from those which were placed before the Paradise to guard the access to the tree of life; whilst Kitto (Cyclopæd. of Bibl. Liter. i. 215, 216) believes, that it was known from Egyptian prototypes. If the latter opinion has at least some possibility, the former deserves scarcely any notice. Josephus (Antiq. III. vi. 5) remarks, that they resembled no animals that were ever seen by man, and that no man in his day knew their form (so also *Clem. Alex.*, Strom. v. p. 241). Ezekiel (i. 10) describes them as compound figures, with the heads of a man, an ox, a lion, and an eagle (representing reason, power, strength, and penetration; or, perhaps love, constancy, magnanimity, and sublimity), with four wings, two of which served to fly, two others to cover the body, and straight feet, without flexible joints at the knee. But, although the Cherubim had very different forms, so that they have not inappropriately been called, "changeable hieroglyphics"; and although the prophet might in his vision have beheld more complicated and adorned figures, mostly with four heads, but sometimes only with two (that of a man and a lion; xli. 18, 19): it appears from our context (xxv. 20), that those on the ark had but one face and two wings; and as they were intended to symbolize the divine presence (see *infra*), that face was most probably that of man, who is the image of God; and even in the descriptions of Ezekiel, however different they are from the Cherubim of the ark, the human figure is predominant (i. 5). But winged figures are not peculiar to Egypt; they are most frequently found in the whole of western Asia, especially Babylon and Persia; and although they are mostly of a very phantastical form, there are yet some among them, which would nearly agree with the allusions made in our text (compare *Kitto*, *loc. cit.* p. 424, 425; cut 226, No. 1, 2; and cut 231, No. 4); and all of them have at least that characteristic in common with the Biblical Cherubim, that they have a purely symbolical character; so that even heathens could not suspect the holy Tabernacle of the Israelites to contain idolatrous images (see *Wilkinson*, Religion and Architect. of the Anc. Egypt. p. 275); except, perhaps, an absurd remark of Tacitus (Hist. v. 4). Hengstenberg (Mos. and Egypt p. 157—164), who strives to prove almost in all Mosaic institutions an Egyptian model, asserts, like many earlier commentators, that the Cherubim are identical with the sphinxes; for, as the latter were a combination of the

forms of a man and a lion, indicating the joint qualities of wisdom and strength so had the former the head of a man and the body of a lion. But 1. he starts from the erroneous supposition, that among the ancient nations, with which the Hebrews came into contact, the Egyptians alone knew compound animals; and 2. he asserts, that of the four heads of the Cherubim of Ezekiel, those of the man and the lion, are the principal ones; but the sphinx has only *one* head, the resemblance with the lion lies in the *body*; and therefore the Cherubim of Ezekiel can in no way be compared with the sphinxes of Egypt. Others trace the Cherubim, with as little propriety, to the dragons of the Greeks, or the griffins of the Indians, or to the horses of the Greeks and Romans, which draw Jupiter's chariot.—These are the implements of the Holy of Holies.

B. THE HOLY, OR THE SANCTUARY was twenty cubits long and ten cubits high; it was separated from the Holy of Holies by the costly curtain above described; and its entrance was at the eastern side, through another less magnificent curtain. The furniture of the sanctuary was:

1. THE SHEW-BREAD TABLE. It was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold, one cubit and a half high; its plate was two cubits long and one cubit broad. The latter rested on boards or lists, of one hand-breadth, which encircled the four feet like an *enclosure*. The plate was, besides, like the ark, encircled at the border with a golden wreath or crown. Whether the enclosure had its own wreath of gold is not quite clear from xxv. 24, 25; but this is with probable reasons denied by several Rabbins. Four golden rings were fastened in the four corners of the feet, probably immediately under the border or enclosure; and two staves of acacia wood, overlaid with gold, were put into the rings for the transport of the table in the journeys of the Hebrews.

On the table were placed as *shew-bread* twelve (unleavened) cakes, in two rows of six cakes each. They were made of the finest flour, each of them containing two omers, or two-tenths of an ephah (see note to xvi. 36); according to Jewish tradition, they were ten hand-breadths long, five broad, and one finger thick. On each row pure *frankincense* was burnt, either on the cakes themselves, or in two vials placed on the rows, as a symbol that the shew-bread was offered and sanctified to God. They were always on the table; but every Sabbath they were taken off, replaced by new ones, and eaten by the priests in the holy place (Lev. xxiv. 5—9; see, however, 1 Sam. xxi. 6—9).

The utensils belonging to the holy table were all of gold, namely, *a) the dishes*, in which the bread was brought upon the table and taken away from it. They were rather flat. *b) The bowls*, probably for carrying the frankincense, which was to be burnt over the bread (see Lev. xxiv. 7). *c. The cans and cups*, most probably for pouring out the wine for the libations connected with the burning of the frankincense; and although the wine is not mentioned in our text, both those words, and the analogy with similar offerings, render it indubitable, that it was used in the service of the holy table (see Numb. iv. 7), although it might not have been of equal importance with the bread, from which reason it is like the frankincense, not mentioned in xxv. 23—30.

2. THE CANDLESTICK occupied the southern (or south-western) part of the Sanctuary, opposite the table. It was entirely of gold, and weighed, together with its appendages, one talent of that metal (see note on xxi. 32). It was manufactured with beaten work, hardened by the hammer. It rested on a *base*, the form of which is not described in the sacred text. Rashi conjectures that it had the shape of a chest, with three feet under it; the representation on the triumphal arch of Titus, which contains figures of birds and marine monsters, is undoubtedly spurious. From the base arose a *shaft*, which divided itself into three *branches* to both sides, so that the candelabrum consisted of seven arms. On each of them was put a lamp of an uncertain shape, which was every evening filled with half a log of pure olive oil.

lighted, and extinguished in the morning, except, perhaps, the central lamp, which burnt from evening to evening; or, according to Josephus, three lamps burnt in the day-time. From xxv. 37, it appears that the wick of the middle lamp stood upwards, whilst the wicks of the six branch-lamps were turned towards it; so that the seven lights appeared to form a whole; and, in fact, the shaft was called "the candlestick" (xxv. 35). The dimensions of the shaft and of the branches are alike unknown to us. Josephus calls the arms of the candlestick "thin"; they were most likely of unequal length, and semi-circular form, so that the seven lamps stood in a straight line. Whether the candelabrum was placed so that the lamps extended from west to east, or from north to south, must remain undecided. Josephus (Antiq. III. vii. 7) states, that "the lamps looked to the east and to the south, the candlestick being situate obliquely."

The arms of the candelabrum were ornamented: *a) With calyxes of almond-flowers*, three on each arm, and four on the shaft, one at each point, from which the arms branched out, and the fourth most probably immediately beneath the lamp, or, perhaps, exactly above the base; twenty-two in all; *b) with apples or pomegranates*; they are certainly ornaments of a spherical form, similar to the capitals of columns, although it is impossible to define their exact shape; and *c) with blossoms of pomegranates (?) or lilies, or almonds* (compare Num. xvii. 23); but it is very hazardous to fix upon any particular flower, since the Hebrew word is the general term for blossom or bud. It is the opinion of many expositors, that each calyx had its apple and its blossom; and that those three ornaments together formed a whole, of which, however, the calyxes formed the chief part. But it appears more probable, from ver. 33, compared with ver. 34, that every three calyxes were accompanied by one apple and one blossom, except on the shaft, where the fourth calyx seems to have had its own apple and blossom.

The OIL to be used for the candlestick is described as "olive-oil, pure beaten." The olive-tree, extensively cultivated and highly esteemed by ancient nations, formed one of the most precious productions of Palestine, and one of its most lucrative articles of export. It was chiefly grown on sand-hills and mountains, but thrives also on a moist soil, and even under water. Although it is of very slow growth, it is said to attain an age of from sixteen hundred to two thousand years. It reaches a height of twenty to thirty feet; it has a smooth grey rind; its far-spreading branches cover almost the whole length of the stem to the top; the leaves, which are in pairs, have a lanceolate shape, are thick and stiff, almost without peduncles, about two and a half inches long, and of a dull evergreen on the upper, and hoary on the under surface. Between the leaves, white blossoms break forth in clusters; and the "fruit is an elliptical drupe, with a hard stony kernel, and remarkable from the outer fleshy part being that in which much oil is lodged, and not, as is usual, in the almond of the seed." The berry is first green, and assumes, later, a purple and black colour. It ripens in September. The best kind of oil is obtained from the unripe green olives, which are carefully plucked or shaken off, and then merely squeezed or beaten in a mortar. This is the oil which was prescribed for the holy service; it is of a white colour; it gives a better light and little smoke, and is much superior to the other sorts, obtained from the ripe olives by treading them out with the feet, or by throwing them into oil-presses, or oil-mills, although the latter yielded a more abundant quantity. It was natural, that the holy oil was to be pure, and unmixed with oil of any other quality.

To the candelabrum belong, as accessory utensils, the *snuffers* and the *fire-shovels*.

3. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE. Between the shew-bread table and the candlestick, and before the curtain which separated the Sanctuary from the Holy of Holies (xxx. 6), stood the altar of incense. It was square, one cubit long, one cubit broad,

and two cubits high, of acacia wood overlaid with pure gold, ornamented with a golden *wreath* round its top, with *horns* of the same materials as the altar itself on which the blood of atonement was sprinkled by the High Priest, Lev. iv. 7 (whilst the rest of the blood was poured at the bottom of the altar of burnt-offerings), and with golden rings for the staves. No sacrifice of any kind was to be killed on this altar; pure incense only was to be burned on it by Aaron every morning, when he dressed the lamps, and every evening when he lighted them. About the different kinds of incense to be used for that purpose, see note on xxx. 34—38.

c. THE COURT. Around the Tabernacle and its implements was a Court, one hundred cubits long, fifty cubits broad, and formed by pillars and curtains five cubits high. The pillars were of wood, not plated with metal, twenty on each of the longer sides, ten on the shorter ones. But as the pillars at the corners were counted double, their aggregate number amounted to fifty-six (not sixty) columns. Like those of the Tabernacle, they were, at the nether end, provided with *sockets*, in this case of brass, but they were ornamented at the top with *capitals* overlaid with silver (xxxviii. 17), and had, besides, silver *hooks*, over which *rods* of the same metal were laid, to connect the columns, and to support the hangings of the Court. These hangings were of fine twined linen, five cubits between every two pillars, but as the northern and southern side had each one hundred cubits and as twenty-one pillars of the distance of five cubits would be required for one hundred cubits, we must suppose that five cubits of the hangings were taken up by foldings and by the thickness of the columns. The same was necessarily the case with the hangings of the western side.

The entrance into the Court was from the east, that when the sun arose it might send its first rays upon it. Here was, exactly in the middle, a door, twenty cubits wide, overhung with a curtain of the same materials and workmanship as that before the Sanctuary, so that from each side of this entrance a space of fifteen cubits was left. The curtain was supported by five columns, and the hangings on each side of it by three pillars. We must here again suppose that the curtain was so folded that it occupied twenty cubits of stuff between the four columns, whilst the fifteen cubits of hanging at each side rested on their three columns *and* the extreme pillar of the curtain.

The Court had no covering, but was exposed to the open air. From without it was, like the Tabernacle, fastened in the ground by brass pins and tent ropes.

The sacred text does not state in which part of the Court the Tabernacle stood, but the most probable opinion is that of Philo, who asserts that the Tabernacle stood twenty cubits distant from the north, south, and west side of the Court (not in its middle, as Josephus states), so that fifty cubits remained for the space between the southern side of the Tabernacle and the entrance of the tent. This latter space was occupied by two holy implements, namely:

1. THE ALTAR OF BURNT-OFFERINGS. It was of hollow boards of acacia wood, covered with brass, but probably, except during the journeys, filled with earth (see xx. 24), which formed, at the same time, the upper side, or surface, on which the sacrifices were performed. Its height was three cubits, but both its length and breadth were five cubits. At the four corners were four horns of the same wood, overlaid with brass, on which a part of the blood of the sin-offering was sprinkled by the priest (xxix. 12), and by which, perhaps, the sacrificial animals were fastened to the altar before they were killed (Psalm cxviii. 27). Instead of the wreath round the ark, and the altar of incense, this altar had a *border*, and under it a *grate of network of brass*, according to some, to serve as a kind of bench or step for the officiating priests; according to others, more probably in order to receive whatever might fall from the altar, and, as the network might have been very close, coals or wood were caught by it, and ashes only fell through. The network reached downward from the

border to the middle of the altar (xxvii. 5). On it, at the four corners of the altar, were four rings of brass into which two staves of acacia wood, overlaid with brass, were put for transport. From the ground to the top of the altar, led, as many assert, a kind of gentle sloping dam of earth, according to Rabbinical tradition, on the south side (see, however, on xx. 23).

The vessels used in connection with this altar, were all of brass, namely: *a. pots*, to remove the ashes; *b. shovels*, to clean the surface of the altar; *c. bowls*, or, *basins*, in which the blood of the sacrifices was received for sprinkling the altar; *d. forks*, or, *fleshhooks*, by means of which the pieces of flesh were put or turned on the fire; and, *e. fire-shovels*.

2. THE LAVER in which the priests washed their hands and feet before they performed any of their sacred functions. It stood between the altar of burnt-offerings and the curtain of the Sanctuary, according to the Talmud, a little to the south. It was made of brass; chiefly "of the looking-glasses of the women, who served at the door of the holy tabernacle" (xxxviii. 8). Its form is not described in the text: but we may infer from the corresponding vessels of the temple of Solomon, that it was semicircular; and all ancient interpreters agree in this opinion. It is further supposed, that it was provided with small apertures or taps, through which water could conveniently be let out; for it is asserted, that the priests could not wash their feet in the laver itself, because it was too high, and because the water would have become impure and unavailable if but one priest had washed his feet therein. But we leave these, and other similar conjectures undecided, since they cannot be substantiated from the Biblical text. The laver rested on a brazen base, the shape of which must likewise remain uncertain.

This is a brief outline of the Holy Tabernacle and its implements; in which sketch we have endeavoured to simplify the description as much as practicable, by studiously avoiding all polemical regard to unimportant accessories.—If we survey the sacred structure in its totality, we cannot discover any of its parts, which the Israelites should have been unable to execute, either from want of materials, or deficiency of skill; and the frequently repeated objections against the authenticity of the sacred description based on that argument, have been so successfully refuted by Baehr (Symb. i. 271—276; ii. 116—119), both as regards the character and proportions of the building, and the mechanical mode of its execution, that we consider it unnecessary to enter into a question so widely connected with researches foreign to our present subject. And with these arguments, the arbitrary conjecture, that the Tabernacle is a fictitious structure, framed in smaller dimensions after the model of the Solomonian temple, loses the only weak basis on which it rested.

II. THE MATERIALS USED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TABERNACLE.

A. THE METALS mentioned in xxv. 3, are gold, silver, and brass; the application of iron was considered inappropriate in the construction of holy utensils (xx. 22).

1. GOLD, almost everywhere qualified by the epithet *pure*, is according to the Talmud such gold, as "loses nothing in the fire." In the Tabernacle it was used *a*) as a solid mass: for the hooks and nails of the pillars, and of the two inner curtains; the loops and hooks of the first covering, for the mercy-seat, the Cherubim, the rings and the wreaths of the ark, of the shew-bread table, and of the altar of incense; for the dishes, the bowls, cans, and cups; for the candlestick, with the snuffers and fire-shovels. *b*) As a covering of the acacia wood: for the boards and poles of the Tabernacle, the pillars of the two inner curtains; for the ark, the shew-bread table, and the altar of incense, with their staves, and the horns of the latter.

2. SILVER, which is here not described by any epithet. It was used *a*) as a solid

mass for the sockets of the boards of the Tabernacle and of the pillars for the two internal curtains; the hooks and rods of the pillars of the Court; *b*) as a covering for the capitals of the Court pillars.

3. BRASS was considered less precious than the two preceding metals, although it was of great durability, and had a shining colour. It was used *a*) as a solid mass for the sockets of the pillars of the middle curtain, the loops and hooks of the second covering, the tent pins of the Tabernacle and of the Court; the sockets of the Court-pillars; the border, the net-work, and the rings of the altar of burnt-offerings; its pots, shovels, bowls, forks, and fire-shovels; the laver and its base *b*) As a covering: for the sides of the altar of burnt-offering, its horns and staves.

Thus some idea might be formed of the quantity of metal employed in the sacred structure; and the holy text distinctly states the amount of each species, namely, 29 talents and 730 *holy* shekels of gold, 100 talents and 1775 *holy* shekels of silver, and 70 talents and 1400 shekels of brass (xxxviii. 24, *et seq.*). About the value of the shekel and the talent, see note on xxi. 32. The hundred talents of silver were applied for the hundred sockets of the Tabernacle; and the 1775 shekels for the hooks, rods, and capitals of the pillars of the Court.—Many modern critics have considered this great quantity of precious metals as another argument against the authority of the Mosaic description of the Tabernacle; but the enormous, almost incredible abundance of gold and silver in the Orient, especially in former times, is so well known, that that objection must appear perfectly futile, and we content ourselves with referring to the interesting facts and data compiled by *Baehr*, *Symb. i.* p. 259, 260.

B. COLOURS enumerated in xxv. 4, 5.

1. BLUE, OR VIOLET-BLUE, which is a dark colour playing partly into red, partly into sea-blue, was obtained from the juice of a shell-fish, mostly found in rocks and cliffs, called *buccinum*, *murex* or *conchylum*. It is of a spiral form, with a round opening. However, the exact species of shell-fish, from which the ancients gained the purple, is still a subject of dispute. Such fish were abundantly found on the coasts of Phœnicia, Laconia, and North Africa; and are still of frequent occurrence throughout the whole of the Mediterranean and Atlantic; but the shells of the different coasts yield very different colours. If the Phœnicians (Tyrians) are not the inventors of that colour, they were at least (like the Lydians) most celebrated for the skill which they exhibited in its application for dyeing. Woollen stuffs were especially dyed with it, but sometimes also linen and cotton. Modern observations have testified the fact, that the tinging juice is originally white, but upon being exposed to the sun becomes first light green, then deep and sea-green, and then only blue or red; but it has been remarked, that this circumstance does not appear to entirely agree with the purple of the ancients. As each shell-fish furnishes only a few drops of the tinging juice, called the flower, and contained in a white vessel in the neck, it was considered so precious, that only kings and princes, and the highest officials, wore purple garments, and that in the time of the Roman emperors, the citizens were interdicted, on penalty of death, from using that colour. Contravention of this law was regarded as *crimen læsæ majestatis*; and the *murex* itself was called *holy*.—In the Tabernacle it was applied for the curtains before the Court, the Sanctuary, and the Holy of Holies, and for the first covering and its loops.

2. RED is obtained from a shell-fish, which is caught in the sea by bait. Pliny (ix. 60) describes it thus: "The second class of shell-fish is called *purpura*, the mouth of which is projecting in a fistular form, and the inside of which has a tubular shape. It is, besides, furnished with prickles to the top, generally seven such stings standing on each spire, which are not found in the *buccinum*, but both have as many spires as they count years."—It was used for the same parts of the Tabernacle as the blue, except for the loops of the first covering.

3. CRIMSON is that bright much-valued colour which is obtained from the dead

bodies and eggs of a small insect, the female of the *coccus ilicis* of Linnæus, (Arabic, *hermes*, crimson), which, towards the end of April, settles on the branches or leaves of the *holm-oak*, and which is so diminutive, that the ancients considered it not as a living insect, but as a sort of grain, or small raisin, and as a vegetable production of the tree itself. "It is about the size and shape of a pea, of a deep violet colour, powdered with white," adhering to plants, chiefly oaks; in the spring, the females lay eggs; then the bodies decay, and form a cover which shields the eggs. The *ilex aquifolia* grows frequently in Asia Minor, Palestine, and in the southern parts of Europe; it attains the height of two or three feet, has oval, pointed, evergreen, bristly leaves, a grey smooth rind, and bears round scarlet-red berries in grape-like clusters. The colour under discussion may, therefore, have been *vermillion* (worm-colour). The Phœnicians were again the nation which had brought the art of preparing and applying crimson to the highest perfection (Plin. ix. 65). It was prescribed to be used for the curtains and hangings of the Tabernacle.

c. STUFFS AND OTHER MATERIALS. They are:

1. LINEN. This is, perhaps, the most contested of all the materials mentioned in connection with the sacred structure; but we have tried, in the larger Edition of this Commentary, to bring in harmony the great variety of conflicting or inaccurate opinions set forth on this subject.

The country most renowned for the manufacture of linen was Egypt. Pliny and Athenæus ascribe the invention of the art of weaving to Egyptians. Some products of their loom were so remarkably fine, that they felt like silk, or resembled entirely the finest cambric or muslin, and were therefore called "woven air." The most remarkable feature in its manufacture is, that the number of threads in the warp exceeded that of the woof, often even by threads four times the quantity. The linen employed for enveloping the mummies was of a much coarser texture, especially that which was next to the body. Linen was likewise exclusively used for household purposes, for dresses, as for the coverings of chairs and couches. The textures had often coloured borders; in such cases, the colour was imparted to the threads previous to the fabrication of the cloth. The colouring matter of the *blue* stripes was generally indigo. (See *Wilkinson*, *Manners* iii. p. 114—127). According to Herodotus (iv. 86), the bands used for enveloping the mummies were *byssine sindon*; and numerous modern microscopic examinations have proved the mummy-cloths, even of the poorest individuals, to be *linen*. For the threads of linen have a cylindrical form, are transparent, and articulated or jointed like a cane; those of cotton have the appearance of a flat ribbon, with a hem or border at each edge. The threads of mummy-cloth have, on accurate observation, been found perfectly to exhibit the qualities of the former, without any mixture of the latter.

2. WOOL. If we read, that the hangings of the Tabernacle were to be made of "linen, and blue, and red, and crimson, with Cherubim of the weaver's work" (xxvi. 1), this is to be understood, that the principal or main substance was linen, but that *wool*, dyed with the costly colours enumerated, and worked into ornamental figures, was skilfully interwoven. And so in all similar passages. That wool was used for that purpose is, in itself, probable, considering the abundance of this material in the East, and its peculiar susceptibility for those shining colours, and it is expressly mentioned in Hebrews ix. 19.

3. GOATS'-HAIR COVERING. The finest and softest hair, probably of the Angora goat (not of the black Syrian, or brown Egyptian, breed), was manufactured into a beautiful, but solid substance, which was used for coverings of tents, and which is so strong, that it withstands even long and violent rain-showers; although this was, in the present case, scarcely necessary, as it was shielded by two other stronger coverings.

4. RAMS' SKINS DYED RED formed the third covering of the Tabernacle. The

rules of Hebrew grammar permit us to understand likewise, *skins of red rams*; and, if so, it would be the *Ovis tragelaphus*, which is thus described: The *tragelaphus* is a distinct species of sheep, having a shorter form than the common species, and incipient tear-pits. Its normal colour is *red*, from bright chesnut to rufous chocolate; which last is the cause of the epithet *purple* being given to it by poets. Far to the south, or within the tropics, the species is densely clothed with coarse short hair, but longer on the neck, and pendant in great abundance beneath the throat. The skins were, perhaps, tanned, and coloured crimson (see *C. Hamilton Smith*, in *Kitto's Cycl.* ii. p. 600).

5. **BADGERS' SKINS** were applied for the fourth and uppermost covering of the Tabernacle, and for wrapping up the ark and other holy implements during the journeys; they are besides mentioned in *Ezek. xvi. 10*, as the material from which ladies' shoes were made. This latter circumstance excludes the opinion of those, especially ancient interpreters, who understand it as a *colour*, although they differ widely in determining it. But it is most difficult to decide, which animal is intended by *tachash*; and as we deem a minute disquisition into this subject here inadvisable, we content ourselves with merely specifying the various significations which have been assigned to that Hebrew term: badger, jackal, seal, boar, pardale, weasel, fitchet, dolphin, mermaid, especially the species of dugong; tahesh, a kind of hyena; walrus (a polar animal); "a ruminant of the antelope family, known to the natives under various names, such as *pacasse*, *empacasse*, *thacasse*, *facasse* and *tachaitze*, all more or less varieties of the word *tachash*" (!) (*C. H. Smith*).—In such uncertainty, and considering that the question is, after all, of little importance, we adhere to the received translation of badger, which has, at least, as many reasons in its favour as any of the other numerous conjectures. For the objection, that probably the skins of *clean* animals only were applied for the Tabernacle, does not appear of great weight, if we consider that this is the fourth quite external covering separated from the framework by two other coverings.

6. **ACACIA WOOD** was the only wood employed in the whole structure of the Tabernacle. It grows very abundantly in Arabia Petraea, chiefly near the Sinai, so that even a locality there was called Shittim (*Num. xxv. 1*). There are especially two genera of this tree, the *Acacia vera*, which yields the gum-arabic, and which is described by *Hasselquist* (*Trav. p. 514*), and the *Acacia Arabica*, which is very similar to the former, but the blossoms of which are not fragrant like those of the *Acacia vera*. The wood of the *Acacia* is so durable, that it is said even not to rot in water. It has, further, the quality of extreme lightness, which must have increased its value as a material for a *portable* tent.

The usual *measure* mentioned in connection with the sacred structure is the *cubit*. The Hebrew word signifies originally *fore-arm*; and not in Hebrew alone are many measures derived from parts of the human body (compare hand-breadth, or palm; finger-breadth, span, *xxviii. 16*); but in many other languages are arm and ell expressed by the same word. This cubit comprised naturally the length from the elbow to the extremity of the longest finger (not merely to the root of the hand at the wrist), and was generally considered to contain six palms or hand-breadths, which was the length of the common Asiatic and Egyptian cubit, and of that of the Romans. This is the cubit "by the fore-arm of a man," mentioned in *Deut. iii. 11*.—But it is further known, that the Babylonians used, besides, another "royal" cubit, which was by one palm longer than the common one; and it is, from two passages of the Scriptures, more than probable, that the Hebrews adopted in later periods that longer measure; namely, 1. from *2 Chron. iii. 3*, where cubits "of the former length" are introduced; and 2. from *Ezek. xl. 5*, where we read of "six cubits of one cubit and a palm each." It is obvious, that these two cubits cannot be distinguished as "sacred and profane," as has been done after the analogy of the two kinds of the shekel (see note on *xxi. 32*).

Nor can we see, that the supposition of Winer and others, that the Hebrews used in their common commercial intercourse a third, shorter cubit of five palms, has any foundation or probability, although a similar opinion has been advanced by Rabbinical writers also. Now, according to the accurate calculations of Boeckh, Bertheau, and Thénius, the cubit of six palms contains 0·48390 French millimeter, or 214·512 Parisian lines. About *hand-breadths*, see note on xxv. 25.

It is well known, that among many other nations of antiquity also holy arks or shrines were employed for religious purposes; among the Egyptians, the Trojans, Greeks, Romans, Etruscans, Northern Germans, Mexicans, and even among the tribes of the islands of the South Sea. Most of the modern critics have, therefore, with great assurance pointed to these shrines, especially those of the Egyptians as the models of the Mosaic ark. But although the external forms of both are not entirely different (we see in almost all of them winged human figures, corresponding with the Cherubim, in some a wreath, and in some a cover like the Caphoreth): it is unquestionable, that their respective contents and purposes were diametrically opposed; for whilst the Hebrew ark was destined as the receptacle of the holiest religious and moral truths of Mosaism, the Greek and Egyptian shrines contained only symbols of begetting and conceiving, or of the most material powers of physical nature (see *supra*, p. 30). If therefore, there be any historical connection between the Egyptian shrines and the Mosaic ark, it is here, as in all similar cases (perhaps also as regards the shew-bread table, the candle-stick, the altar of incense, and the laver), not that of servile and blind imitation, but that of refining and spiritualizing: paganism adapts all religious ceremonies to cosmical, Mosaism to purely ethical purposes. "All these arks," says Rosenmüller, "had, like that of the Hebrews, the aim to render the mysterious objects preserved therein more venerable to the people." But the essential object is that which is *contained* in the ark, not the ark itself; unless we maintain, that the religion of the Egyptians was identical with that of the Hebrews, because both worshipped in temples.

III. THE SYMBOLICAL MEANING OF THE TABERNACLE.

Two extreme opinions have been proposed on this question; the one distinguished by its great simplicity, the other characterized by an extraordinary degree of sagacious combination; and whilst the former has been shared by many, especially modern Biblical enquirers, the latter has obtained in K. W. F. Baehr a most ingenious, learned and persevering champion. It is expedient, briefly to examine the relative value of these two opposite systems:—

1. "The whole structure of the Tabernacle," observes Winer (Bibl. Dict. ii. p. 531), "has undoubtedly been designed after the religious and Levitical requirements, and is simply based upon the ordinary construction of tents. The Oriental tents have usually two divisions; their interior is illumined by a lamp; the back compartment is prohibited to strangers, and was therefore, as the adytum in the Holy Tabernacle, particularly appropriate for the reception of the mysterious ark. For the offering of burnt-sacrifices an open court, capacious enough to receive the worshippers, was necessary. The wood, of which the frame-work was manufactured, is the only one which offered itself in the desert; the adornments with precious metals, and the costly curtains and hangings, are easily accountable from the desire of devoting to the Deity the most valuable part of property, and of furnishing the sanctuary with the greatest possible dignity; even the colours of the first covering are perhaps merely chosen because they were at that time generally employed for similar splendid structures."—But this opinion will satisfy but few. If the Tabernacle was, indeed, nothing but a copy of a common Oriental tent, with no ulterior end or higher meaning, it is impossible to account for the unusually detailed description of the

holy text; for the circumstance, that God "showed Moses the pattern of the Tabernacle, and the pattern of all the implements thereof" (xxv. 9); and for the almost literal repetition of the same description, when the execution of the structure is related (from chap. xxxvi.). If the candelabrum was merely the usual tent-lamp, serving to no other purpose but to illumine the interior, why was it necessary, so minutely to prescribe its shaft, its arms and its ornaments? What does the mercy-seat mean, and what the Cherubim—the altar of incense and the shew-bread table? The Orientals are distinguished by a rich, even luxurious imagination, which lends life, meaning and significance to those objects even, which seem only to appeal to the calm reflective faculties; they attribute to all things, which engage their attention, a higher spiritual meaning; they are apt to symbolize. It is, therefore, unquestionable, that those who adhere to that opinion just quoted, see *too little* in the construction and arrangement of the Mosaic Tabernacle. For whilst the external appearance of the structure was imposing enough to inspire the common mass of the people with feelings of religious reverence and awe, those of superior minds and deeper intellects found in its parts and composition inexhaustible materials for the most fertile reflections, and for an ennobling insight into the attributes of the divine Ruler, and His relation to the chosen people.

2. It is not quite so easy to dispose of the second opinion above alluded to. But we should deem this part of our work incomplete and deficient, if we did not try to offer a succinct exposition and criticism of Baehr's views. He judiciously and appropriately takes his starting-point from the names with which the Tabernacle is designated in the sacred text, and shows: *a.* that "house," "tent," and "habitation," are equivalent terms. But here already he makes an incomprehensible leap in his argumentation; for he asserts, "the structure which God has erected, the house in which God lives, is—the *creation of heaven and earth.*" However, we read distinctly in xxix. 44, the reason, why the Tabernacle was called "the house of God"; for "I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel, and will be their God." It is singularly illogical to suppose, that God commanded the erection of a visible dwelling-place among the people of Israel, and that this dwelling-place should yet be nothing else but heaven and earth, which are themselves visible objects, and required no allegorical representation. But this is the foundation of Baehr's whole symbolical system, which, as he himself confesses, is not substantiated by a single passage of the Old Testament; and as that principal idea is erroneous, it must necessarily lead to very fallacious interpretations, if applied to the individual parts of the Tabernacle. And, in fact, we meet with artificial symbolization at almost every step. On the one hand, he maintains, that the ground represents the earth; the roof or covering signifies the heavens—the pillars are the mountains, which support the heavens (i. p. 77); whilst he asserts, on the other hand, that the Tabernacle itself is an image of heaven, and the Court an emblem of the earth (p. 79); and it is this latter conception, which he especially carries out and advocates. But if the Tabernacle signifies the heavens, what does the decided distinction between the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies mean? (see *infra*).

b. "Tabernacle of meeting" signifies the place where God meets and addresses Moses and the people; it is *not* originally intended as a place of assembly for the Israelites, although this might have been the natural consequence of its primary destination. (The rendering of the English version, "Tabernacle of the congregation," is, therefore, incorrect. See xxv. 22; xxix. 42—45; xxx. 6; Num. xvii. 19).

c. "Tabernacle of the testimony," is properly so called, from the most important and sacred object preserved therein, the decalogue (which is called a "witness" of the Covenant between God and Israel). However, the two appellations, "Tabernacle of meeting" and "Tabernacle of the testimony," are not synonymous; between the place, where God appears to Moses or Israel, and the ark, where the tablets of the

Law are preserved, we see no necessary internal connection; they are two different names of the Tabernacle, derived from two different purposes, which that structure was destined to serve; although that place was the most appropriate for future revelations, in which the result of the first and greatest of all revelations was deposited. It appears scarcely necessary to comment on the final result at which that author arrives: that the Tabernacle is, on the one hand, the image of creation or of general revelation, and, on the other hand, a symbol of the revelation by the word through the medium of the decalogue; it is the place of light and life; it is, in a word, the world and the creation conceived as the testimony and revelation of God.

d. "Sanctuary" is the name of the Tabernacle, because it was intended as the abode for God, the Holy One; and because He had promised to reveal Himself there to Moses and the people. But it is forced, to connect, by gradual, although almost imperceptible, transitions, the notion of sanctity with that of sanctification, purity, and salvation; so that the Tabernacle would be the place "where Israel, by its communion with God, obtains true salvation." The term Sanctuary, therefore, so far from being "the most specific and most characteristic" designation of the Tabernacle, is much less definite than the two preceding ones; and *holy* is no epithet exclusively used with respect to the Tabernacle, but employed for everything which has any, even the remotest, reference to the Deity or religion.

So, then, remains as the meaning of the Tabernacle, that it was an external but holy symbol of the presence of God among the Israelites, and the place from whence God promised to meet and to grant His future revelations to Moses and the people, and where the decalogue, as the witness of the divine covenant, was preserved.

Hence the meaning and purport of the different parts of the Tabernacle are self-evident. The *ark* contained the tablets of the Law, the germ and quintessence of all revelation, the most precious treasure of the holy people, the representative of the entire Law, the basis of Israel's whole existence; and the Most High himself, symbolized by the mysterious forms of the Cherubim, spread His protecting wings over that eternal inheritance of mankind. The *mercy-seat*—the most important emblem of the Holy of Holies—was the place for the expiation and sanctification of Israel, for the reconciliation of God with His people. The *Cherubim* represented, therefore, the presence of God, who promised to instruct Moses and the people from between these holy figures; they were the emblem of the Hebrew theocracy; and God Himself is hence frequently called "He who throneth between the Cherubim" (1 Sam. iv. 4; 2 Sam. vi. 2; etc.); and, like the Cherubim before the entrance of Paradise (Gen. iii. 24), they are, as a part of the ark, connected with the expiation of sin, and are the guardians of a divine and mysterious treasure. And, as the revelations of God took place from spirit to spirit, merely by the voice of the Eternal without a corporeal visible form, that part of the sacred structure which contained the symbols of divine presence and revelation was dark, neither illumined by the rays of the sun, nor by artificial light. The Holy of Holies was to impress the officiating High-priest with a feeling of supernatural awe and reverence. The *shew-breads* are a perpetual offering brought to God by the *people* of Israel (therefore, *twelve* cakes): the *table* was a necessary utensil for these offerings. The *candlestick*, in itself indispensable to illumine the dark, reminds of the eternal watching providence of God, and of knowledge and enlightenment through the word of God (compare Isa. ii. 5; Ps. xxxvi. 10; etc.), which should never cease in Israel (Psa. lxxx. 16); and the *seven* arms point to the sacred, purely religious, spiritual character of the candlestick. The meaning of the *altars* and the *laver* requires no specification. The utensils of the Holy of Holies typify the descending of God to man; those of the Sanctuary and the Court, the rising up of man to God; and thus the whole structure admirably represents the mutual love of God and Israel. That the altar of burnt-offerings was the chief object of the holy tent is an untenable opinion; none of the names supports an assumption,

according to which all the complicated utensils of the Sanctuary and of the Holy of Holies would be reduced to mere appendages of the altar of the Court. It is beyond every doubt, that the ark and the mercy-seat were the real end of the sacred structure; and hence their place in its most recondite part. All the implements of the Sanctuary and of the Court belonged only to the *service* of the Tabernacle, and sacrifices were offered before its erection also (xix. 12; xxiv. 5).

3. Baehr further finds a particular significance in all the numbers mentioned in connection with the Tabernacle and its materials; the fact, that ancient, especially Oriental, nations attached a high importance to certain numbers (i. 119—138) induces him to examine all the measures of the holy tent, and to expound their meaning. It will not be uninteresting to offer here, in a concise form, the results of his investigations, equally obtained by sagacity and learning.

The number *one*, being the first real number, and the head and source of the whole numerical system, may be considered as *the number by itself*, but serves chiefly to designate the Deity as the unity which comprises the universe.

Two is separation, difference, opposition, antagonism, imperfection, and even destruction and perdition; but, being the first equal number, it is the representative of every thing equal.

Three signifies that concrete and perfect unity resulting from the reconciliation of difference and opposition; it is the perfection of all ideas, and especially the "*signature of the Deity*." "All the religious systems of the ancient world agree in representing the supreme Deity as a trinity of combined gods, forming one whole; and whilst this one primitive being is a mere abstract, neutral and impersonal, the divine impersonification appears always in the trinity, from which the other deities emanate." In this sense, the trinity was familiar to the Indians, Buddhists, Chinese, Chaldeans, and even to the Persians, Greeks, and almost all northern nations.

Four is the number of the *world*, the sum of all created things and of divine revelation.

Five is the number of perfection in its half-accomplished stage; it is not itself perfection, but strives to attain it.

About the number *seven* see note on xxiii. 10—12.

Ten is the symbol of completion and perfection ($1+2+3+4=10$).

Twelve (4×3) denotes a whole, in the midst of which God resides, a body, which moves after divine laws; it is therefore the "*signature of the people of Israel*."

It is neither the place here, to investigate into the probability and truth of these significations attributed to the various numbers, nor do we intend to follow Baehr into his minute, although very ingenious application of those symbols to the individual parts of the Tabernacle, or into his symbolical interpretation of the metals, colours, and other materials used in that holy structure. The metals, in his opinion, typify light, and more especially is *gold* the image of heavenly and divine light; *silver*, that of purity and moral excellence; brass resembles gold in colour, but is considerably inferior to it in splendour. Acacia wood is a symbol of indestructibility and eternity. And thus the Tabernacle is "the abode of light and life." The colours are the symbols of the different names of God; *blue* signifies the special revelation of God, being the colour of heaven and ether; *red* denotes the highest dignity, majesty and royal power; *crimson* is that, which fire and blood have in common, and symbolizes therefore life in its full extent; *white*, lastly, is the colour of light and innocence, or sanctity. And so again is the Tabernacle the image of light and life. It must be admitted, that Baehr's combinations are generally most sagacious and skilful, that they are supported by an extraordinary amount of research, and that they mostly result in ideas perfectly in harmony with the spirit and genius of the sacred writings. But that author was not satisfied with general truths; he applied them to the minutest details of the Tabernacle; he carried the comparison

between the ideas and their external representation to an excess often bordering on futile play; he lost himself in deductions more and more foreign to the original principles; and his labours, although carried on with the greatest intellectual vigour, have not produced those valuable results for science to which they might have led, had he known how to govern a too agile imagination.

4. We conclude with briefly reviewing the principal other symbolical interpretations of the Tabernacle hitherto proposed:—

a. The oldest explanation of this kind is that of Philo. He believes, that the Tabernacle is a representation of the universe; the tent itself which was only accessible to the priests, signifies the intellectual, the open Court, the material world; the four colours, or four covers, are the four elements; the two Cherubim signify the two principal (the creative and ruling) powers of God, or the two hemispheres above and beneath the earth; the altar of incense is to recall the productions of the earth and the sea, which God mercifully brought forth for the use of man; the candlestick, with its seven lamps, typifies the seven planets; the middle lamp (that of the shaft) the sun; the table with the shew-bread signifies the human food; the twelve cakes denote also the twelve signs of the zodiac and the twelve months.—Very similar to this exposition of Philo is that of Josephus: the Court means the earth; the Sanctuary, the sea; the Holy of Holies, the heaven; and kindred ideas are expressed by Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Chrysostomus, Theodoret, Jerome, and many Rabbinical writers.—It will be perceived, that this is fundamentally the same view as that defended by Baehr, who however, justly deviates from it as regards the astronomical elements (the planets, zodiac, etc.), which have been brought into connection with the holy abode of God, and which would almost stamp upon it a pagan character. In fact, nothing is more in antagonism with the purely ideal and moral character of Mosaism than a relation, however distant or hidden, with the powers of the Kosmos. God and nature, the creation and the Creator, are everywhere so decidedly distinguished, that the most majestic descriptions of the glory of nature are invariably accompanied by some declaration, that all that grandeur proceeded from God, and is subject to His sovereign will (Ps. civ. etc.); and so deeply was this truth felt by the Psalmist, that he added, after a splendid picture of the glory and sublimity of nature, an almost still more enthusiastic praise of the Divine revelation and its beatifying influence upon the soul of man (Ps. xix; compare p. 185, 186).

b. Many Talmudical commentators, starting from the Scriptural statement, that Moses saw the model (xxv. 40) of the Tabernacle during his stay on the mountain, assert, that the Tabernacle is really an imitation of a similar, although infinitely more grand structure in heaven; that a certain invisible connection exists between both, and that everything which is performed in the earthly Tabernacle is at the same time done in a much higher perfection in its heavenly prototype, especially as regards expiation. However, few only have understood this in quite a literal and material sense; by far the greater part of the Rabbins, spiritualizing these notions, maintained, that the Holy Tabernacle embodied, in earthly forms, certain divine and ideal truths, which were communicated to Moses during his mysterious communion with the Deity.

c. The typical or Christian explanation, proposed already by some Fathers of the Church, but more fully developed by Cocceius and his followers, enjoyed long a great reputation. According to this school, the Tabernacle is a type of the congregation or church of Christ, the Court represents the external or visible, the tent the internal or invisible church, namely, so that the Sanctuary is the symbol of the *ecclesia militans* and of the *status gratiae*, and the Holy of Holies that of the *ecclesia triumphans* and of the *status gloriæ*. However, these views have long been abandoned even by the greater part of the orthodox Christian theologians, and we content ourselves with condensing the just objections urged against them: *a.* The Tabernacle, if conceived in this sense,

loses all connection with, or application to, the time for which it was intended, and during which it existed. β . That interpretation leads to the most artificial, often ridiculous conclusions, if applied to the individual parts of the sacred text. γ . The Tabernacle is no holy *person*, but the holy *place* of divine revelations. δ . The passages in the New Testament which are generally adduced in corroboration of this system (Ephes. ii. 21, 22; 1 Peter ii. 4; Hebr. ix.), contain no direct allusion to Christ or the Christian congregation, but only to the general and local character of the structure.

d. Maimonides, Spencer, Hess, Koeppen, and many modern antiquaries, consider the holy temple as a magnificent palace for the Almighty King of Israel; the priests are the ministers of the King, the sacrifices are demonstrations of loyalty, the shew-bread and the wine are His food, the mercy-seat is His throne, the sanctuary the ante-chamber for the officials, etc. This opinion has been combated by Baehr (i. p. 10—15, and 113—116) with particular sagacity and success. He proves that the veneration of the kings was copied from the worship of the deities, not *vice versa*; for the palaces were constructed like temples, not the temples like palaces. Moses saw the prototype of the Tabernacle, which would have been superfluous, if the latter was nothing but the usual tent of Oriental princes. If luxury and splendour were the chief consideration, why were many valuable offerings of the people refused? (xxxvi. 5—7). If it was intended as the palace of a mortal king, why is the couch or bed wanting? etc. However, it must be added, that Maimonides seems himself not to have been quite satisfied with this merely external, almost worldly explanation of the holy structure, and bending towards the right direction, he maintains likewise, that it represented certain fundamental truths of Mosaism, as, for instance, the ark proves the unity of God; the Cherubim, the existence of angels, etc.

e. Luther believes the Tabernacle to represent human nature; the Court signifies the body, the Sanctuary is the soul, the Holy of Holies the spirit. The same idea appears already in Philo's writings, and has been carefully elaborated by Friederich in the work above quoted. But this interpretation also completely loses sight of the immediate destination of the holy tent, and is, besides, especially in the anatomical and osteological deductions of Friederich, as artificial as the typical or the oldest cosmical symbolization.

f. We have already stated the general views of Baehr, and add here a short survey of the symbolical significations which he ascribes to the individual utensils. *The ark* occupied the exact centre of the Tabernacle [?], because the decalogue formed the centre and heart of the Mosaic Law; it was covered with gold not only from without but also from within, because the interior enclosed the greatest treasure of the people; the golden wreath denotes divine sanctification. *The mercy-seat* is the throne of the God of Israel, the central point of the Hebrew theocracy, the place of divine revelation, of forgiveness and redemption. *The Cherubim* represent the creation in its most perfect productions [which is questionable; his whole exposition on the Cherubim does not lean on the *Mosaic* figures, but those of Ezekiel, with their *four* faces instead of *one*]; they stand in a stooping attitude, in humility and devotion looking upon the throne of God [?]; the mercy-seat and the Cherubim together signify omnipotence, sanctity and expiation. The ark is, in importance, subordinate to the mercy-seat, and stands to it in the relation of a foundation to the house erected upon it. *The shew-bread* is that bread through which God shows Himself, or by the eating of which the soul beholds God [certainly a very far-fetched opinion]; the *twelve* cakes correspond with the number of the tribes of Israel; they were unleavened, because every corruption and putrefaction were removed from the holy place; and the incense shows the heavenly transport of the soul which it feels in beholding God; the *shew-bread table* indicates that the means of satisfying the soul with the light of heaven are always in readiness

in the divine abode [with which interpretation disagree, however, passages such as xxxiii. 20: "thou canst not see my face"]. The *light* of the candle-stick is the type of knowledge and intelligence, the seven-fold light makes this knowledge manifest as pure and holy; the *candle-stick* itself is the word of God [and Baehr applies this idea of the word of God to all the parts and ornaments of the candelabrum, with more ingenuity than clearness and plausibility]; the *incense* is the symbol of the name of God [for the incense represents prayer, and praying is equivalent to invoking the name of God! In the same manner, and with the same result, he applies this to the four different kinds of incense prescribed by Moses]; the *altar of incense* is a monument of blissful divine communication, and an exhortation for man to praise and to worship God, and to elevate himself to His perfection; it was square, because it was a place of revelation; the four horns denote the divine power, glory, and majesty; the *altar of burnt-offerings* was made of earth, to remind of the sinfulness and frailty of man, for whose salvation the animal sacrifices were instituted; the frame-work was of acacia wood, because it was a place of light and life; it was covered with brass, which corresponds symbolically with the earth; its dimensions (five by three cubits) represent the preparatory degree of sanctity, perfection, and revelation; the washing of the hands and the feet in the *laver* signifies the sanctification of God and Israel; the mirrors [which Baehr believes were externally fastened on the laver] symbolize self-examination and self-knowledge, which must precede the purification, and were to remind the priests of their sinfulness.—The reader will, by this sketch of Baehr's system, be enabled to test the correctness of our opinion above pronounced on that author's views (p. 379), and we add, that in the details the relation between the Court and the tent, which he asserts to be that between earth and heaven, is almost entirely lost.—It will suffice merely to mention, without discussing the opinion of the hypercritical school, which sees in the Tabernacle a poor copy of the splendid Solomonic temple, after the model of which it was, in their opinion, fancifully conceived by a later writer, the author of the book of Exodus.

CHAPTER XXV.

SUMMARY.—God commands Moses to order the people of Israel to offer free-will gifts as the materials of a holy Tabernacle to be erected as a visible habitation of God, and for the garments of the priests who were to be consecrated. God describes the dimensions and construction of the ark, the mercy-seat, and the Cherubim; the shew-bread table and its utensils; the candlestick and its accessories.

AND the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 2. Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering; of every man whose heart impelleth him you shall take my offering. 3. And this is the offering which

1. The following commands (to xxxi. 17) were given to Moses during his forty days' stay on Mount Sinai (xxiv. 18); for in xxxi. 18 only it is related, that he received from God the two tables of the Law which were to be preserved in the holy ark (ver. 16: "which I shall give thee").

2. The whole people of Israel are invited to contribute their gifts for the erecting of

the divine habitation, although certain individuals only were appointed to carry out the designs; and this is perhaps the reason of the transition of the third person ("that they take") into the second ("you shall take").—*For me*, for my name, or, to my glorification.

3. The abundance of precious metals and costly materials which the Israelites possessed in the desert, will be found ex-

you shall take of them: gold, and silver, and brass, 4. And blue, and 'red, and crimson, and fine linen, and goats' hair, 5. And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and acacia wood; 6. Oil for the light; spices for anointing-oil, and for incense of perfumes; 7. Onyx-stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod, and for the breast-plate. 8. And they shall make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. 9. Quite so as I show thee the pattern of the Tabernacle and the pattern of all

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Purple, and scarlet.

plicable if we consider the following points: 1st. they inherited from the patriarchs considerable wealth, of which we have no reason to suppose they were robbed in Egypt; there are, on the contrary, traces that they had no want of substance (compare xvi. 3; Numb. xi. 5). 2nd. They had received, at their departure from Egypt, very rich presents in gold and silver and raiment (see iii. 21, 22; xi. 2, 3; xii. 35, 36). 3rd. They enriched themselves by the spoil of the Egyptian army; and, 4th. of the defeated Amalekites. Besides, they had, no doubt, commercial intercourse with the mercantile caravans which traversed the desert, and which could supply them both with the necessaries and the luxuries which they desired (see note on xvi. 4). About the metals mentioned in our verse, see *supra*, p. 372.

4. About the *colours*, see p. 373; those who translate blue, red, and crimson *wool* (Mendelssohn, and others), render the sense rather than the words. It appears from this verse, from xxvi. 1, and especially from xxxv. 25, that the *threads* were dyed before they were manufactured into cloth. That this was also the custom among the ancient Egyptians has been remarked in p. 374, and is testified by modern travellers. About linen and goat's-hair, see p. 374.

5. About the materials enumerated in this verse, see p. 374, 375.

6. About the holy oil, see *supra*, p. 370.

7. The objects here mentioned are described in the explanation of the priestly

garments; see the notes on the twenty-eighth chapter.

8. The words, "that I may dwell among them," are usually considered as a parenthesis, the proper place of which would be at the end of the next verse. But, as the term *sanctuary* was mentioned, its end and purport is at once aptly described, with a few characteristic words (see *supra*, p. 377); and the following verse adds then another very essential feature and condition of the sacred structure.

9. God imparted to Moses the construction of the Tabernacle and its vessels, not merely by verbal description, but by showing him, in his vision on Mount Sinai (ver. 40), its model and prototype. It is undeniable, that the idea which our verse expresses (see also Num. viii. 4) is intended to enforce the conviction, that the Tabernacle has some higher purport and is designed after some more recon-dite plan; that it is to represent the internal spiritual connection between God and Israel, and that it implies a symbolical tendency which reaches far beyond its external construction; and it is a significant fact, that, indeed, both Jewish tradition and all the earlier commentators felt, almost without exception, the internal necessity of searching, beyond the immediate purpose of the edifice, after a deeper, more comprehensive, and more mysterious interpretation. But more than this we are not justified to infer from the obscure expression of our verse, and we cannot stop to examine specula-

its instruments, just so shall you make it.—10. And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two cubits and a half *shall be* its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. 11. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and thou shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about. 12. And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it,

tions like those of several ancient commentators: that Moses really beheld the same Tabernacle in heaven, but on a more magnificent scale (see p. 380), or that God showed him all the mysteries of nature, which he then systematically embodied in the sacred edifice. It suffices that our text is important, as forming a safe basis for the symbolical interpretation of the Tabernacle and its parts. That fundamental idea of the spiritual relation between God and Israel is at once plain and grand; and, whilst its simplicity stamps it with the character of primeval genuineness, its sublimity renders it worthy of forming the foundation of a religious system calculated to elevate and purify mankind to its remotest generations. But we must carefully abstain from working out this elementary idea into complicated and artificial details, foreign to the spirit of the nation and the time in which it originated. The sacred text is our only guide; and we must modestly resign every further progress when that only unfailing guide leaves us.

10—15. *Description of the ark of the Covenant* (see p. 367). The ark and the furniture immediately attached to it, the mercy-seat and the Cherubim, were the chief end of the whole structure of the Tabernacle; for the ark was to contain the "Tables of the testimony," the direct emanation of the Divine will; the mercy-seat was intended perpetually to maintain the purity of Israel and its harmony and connection with God by atonement and repeated communion, whilst the Cherubim represented the Divine presence and His watching Providence (see *supra*, p. 378): therefore our text very appropriately begins with the description

of these three utensils, which, in a higher sense, form an undivided unity, and symbolize the whole sum of revealed religion. From this reason they constitute the only contents of the Holy of Holies, and are not, like the vessels of the Holy, arranged as three separate articles; the mercy-seat and the Cherubim seem to have been worked from one solid mass of gold (vers. 18, 19), and to have formed one connected piece; and the ark was, by its own cover and the Caphoreth doubly closed, to point at once to the paramount sacredness and the eternal perfection and unchangeableness of its contents, the Tables of the Law.—It will not be found surprising, but in exact accordance with the sanctity of the Holy of Holies, that later, when Moses orders, and Bezaleel enters upon, the actual execution of the different implements of the Tabernacle, those three articles are mentioned, not among the first, but among the later parts; for the framework of the structure was necessarily required for the reception of those most sacred utensils, before they could themselves, with propriety, be executed (see xxxv. 11—18; xxxvi. 8; —xxxvii. 9). From the same point of view, namely that of relative importance, the description of the altar of burnt-offerings precedes that of the Court itself, in which that altar was to be placed (compare xxvii. 1—8 and 9—19). In a less regular order is mentioned the altar of incense, which formed the third utensil of the Sanctuary. It is only introduced in xxx. 1, after the description of the Tabernacle itself, the vessels of the Court, and the garments of the priests. But in xxxi. 8; xxx. 15; and xxxviii. 1, it is mentioned in its due place.—In ver. 10

and put *them* on its four ¹feet; and two rings *shall be* on the one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it. 13. And thou shalt make staves of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. 14. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings on the sides of the ark, to bear the ark with them. 15. The staves shall be in the rings of the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Corners.

the *Israelites* are commanded to make the ark ("and they shall make," as in ver. 8, with regard to the whole Tabernacle), whilst in the 11th and the following verses, *Moses* alone is addressed, to intimate: 1. that the whole of Israel should manifest their zeal and interest in the construction of that sacred edifice, which was the symbol of unity with their God; and 2. that Moses was in this, as in many other respects, their representative, who served and acted in their stead.—The verb, "and thou shalt make," generally begins the command concerning a *new* article, but *not always*; as it is sometimes unavoidably used in the more minute description of a utensil already named.—About the length of a *cubit*, see p. 375.—*Thou shalt overlay it with pure gold.* It is doubtful whether this expression signifies the modern art of gilding, or covering with thin plates of precious metal. The etymology of the Hebrew word offers no assistance, as it signifies merely *to make bright*. The same verb is, however, frequently used in the description of the temple of Solomon, in which, for instance, carved wooden-figures and flower-work were adorned in the same manner (1 Kings vi. 28, 35); and it is more than doubtful, whether the gold-leaf can be reduced to a degree of tenuity so as to be applicable for such purposes; but it might also be a matter of some difficulty to fasten plates to the round staves belonging to the Tabernacle. Although, therefore, overlaying might have been the usual, because more ancient process, gilding was applied in some cases, which must be inferred from probability. In Egypt the art of gilding was known and extensively used before the time of the

exodus. The ruins and sepulchres of Thebes have, in this respect also, yielded us unexpected information. Numerous gilt bronze vases, trinkets, statues, toys, and many other objects in metal and wood have been discovered. If the faces of mummies, the painted cloth, the wooden coffin, and other objects were overlaid with thick gold-leaf, this was done intentionally, not from want of skill, which the Egyptians seem to have possessed in an extraordinary degree. The Talmud understands our verb, in all instances, as *plating*, and asserts even, but against our simple context, that Bezaleel made three chests, two of gold and one of acacia wood, all of them perfectly finished, but open; that he then put the wooden chest into the golden, and the other golden one into that of wood, and covered the uppermost; and thus the ark was overlaid with gold within and without.—The *crown of gold* on the ark was round its upper part, not round the middle, see p. 367.—Four golden rings were to be fastened to the *four feet*, the construction of which, being quite subordinate and merely auxiliary parts of the ark, is not mentioned or described. This is the only probable meaning which can be attributed to the Hebrew word, which never signifies *corner*, although it is so interpreted by the Septuagint, Onkelos, and many others. It is true it seems more plausible, that the rings, through which the staves were passed for the transportation of the ark, were rather in the middle, or more at the upper part of the ark, as thus it would have been easier to keep the equilibrium, especially as the Caphoreth and the Cherubim increased the weight; and

ark; they shall not be taken from it. 16. And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.—17. And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold; two cubits and a half shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth.—18. And thou shalt make two Cherubim of gold, of beaten-work shalt thou make them, from the two ends of the mercy-seat. 19. And make one Cherub on the one end, and the other Cherub on the other end; ¹from the mercy-seat shall you make the Cherubim, on its two ends. 20. And the Cherubim shall stretch forth their wings over *it*, covering the mercy-seat with their wings; and their faces *shall look* one to another; towards the mercy-seat shall the faces of the Cherubim be. 21. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Even of.

from this reason, no doubt, Ebn Ezra believes—but against the Hebrew text—that the four rings at the feet were merely for ornament, as is usual in chests. However, the smallness of the dimensions of the ark, renders its safe transportation, even with the rings at its feet, not impossible, especially as the greatest care was taken in carrying the sacred implements. Besides, as Nachmanides observes, “the respect due to the holy ark required that it was borne high and free above the shoulders of the priests.” And the character and meaning of the ark demanded almost, that it should, in the journeys of Israel, be conspicuously visible to the whole people, like a divine standard, convincing them in their fatigues and tribulations of the protecting presence of the God, in whose name Moses had led them, in endless marches and circuits, from the fertile soil of Egypt to the barren and dreary tracts of the wilderness.

16. In the ark was to be deposited the *testimony*, that is, the two Tables of the Law, which were a witness of the divine covenant concluded with Israel, and through Israel with mankind, on condition of the moral laws engraved on them (see p. 493). But this testimony

cannot be understood as a witness *against* Israel, “because it is not yet engraved on the hearts of Israel;” it is, on the contrary, an eternal monument of Israel’s faith and obedience, of its readiness not only to listen to His words (xix. 8; xxiv. 7), but to follow Him through “a pathless desert, in a land which is not sown” (Jer. ii. 2).—The two passages usually quoted in corroboration of that opinion (Deut. xxxi. 21, 26), uncertain in themselves, do not refer to the Tables placed in the ark, but to the whole Law and the parting song of Moses.—The circumstance, that our command concerning the Tables of the Law is repeated in ver. 21, has induced Rabbinical commentators to establish a distinction between these two passages, whereas the 21st verse comprises, by way of recapitulation, the implements of the Holy of Holies, and their mutual position (for the Caphoreth includes the Cherubim), and a mention of the ark occasions naturally an allusion to the Tables, which were the only end and contents of the ark.

17. About the *mercy-seat*, its sacredness and importance, see p. 368, and p. 379.

18—20. About the *Cherubim* and their meaning, see p. 368, and p. 379.—They were to be made of *beaten work*;

ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony which I shall give thee. 22. And there I shall meet with thee, and commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two Cherubim, which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I shall command thee *to say* to the children of Israel.—23. And thou shalt make a table of acacia wood; two cubits *shall be* its length, and a cubit its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. 24. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold round about. 25. And thou shalt make to it a border of a hand-breadth round about, and thou shalt make a golden crown to its border round about. 26. And thou shalt make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings in the four corners which *are* on its four feet. 27. Over

not of *solid* gold, opposed to *hollow* work; nor *turned* work. Nor does it mean, as the ancient commentators usually explained, beaten with the hammer *out of one piece*, in opposition to a vessel joined together from different parts. However, the words "*from* the mercy-seat shall you make the Cherubim," justify us in supposing that they were not fastened to the former in any exterior manner, but that they were worked out of it, on both sides, as inseparably belonging to it; in the same manner as the horns projected from the altar (xxvii. 2). — Philippon attributes to the Cherubim the meaning, "that they step between God and man (as angels), and without destroying the connection between both, they conceal from man the pure and divine spirituality which he is never permitted to attain." But such a complicated, and, in itself, contradictory notion of a separation in the unity, lies far from the true import of the ark and its accessories, which represent the full and unlimited connection between the purity of God and the soul of man; and if the latter does not reach the former, the obstacle lies in man, not in God, who emphatically and incessantly commands: "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God" (Deut. xviii. 13).

21. The construction of the ark required that first the Tables of the Law were deposited in it, and that then only the Caphoreth was placed upon it: and thus it is, indeed, represented in the parallel passage, xl. 20.

22. *And there will I meet with thee.* God promises to reveal His will to Israel, through Moses, from the mercy-seat between the Cherubim; this is, therefore, the place of perpetual and direct revelation, or, of the "meeting of God and Israel," and hence the whole structure is called "the Tabernacle of meeting," see p. 377.

23—29. *Description of the shew-bread table*, see p. 369. As the golden wreath round the ark has been believed to represent the "crown of the Law," so the wreath round the table has been asserted to signify "the crown of kingdom," which belongs to God, who, however, has not, since the creation, when He produced the world out of nothing, departed from the eternal and natural laws prescribed by Him to the universe, but who may make the simple shew-bread to yield the richest blessing. However judicious this application might be, it goes too far in symbolizing ornaments which were only intended to add to the dignity and splen-

against the border shall the rings be for places of the staves to bear the table. 28. And thou shalt make the staves of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, that the table may be borne with them. 29. And thou shalt make its dishes, and ¹its bowls, and its cans, and its cups, with which the libations are made: *of* pure gold shalt thou make them. 30. And thou shalt put upon the table shew-bread before me always.—31. And thou shalt make a candlestick *of* pure gold; of beaten-work shall the candlestick be made; ²its base, and its shaft, its calyxes, its apples, and its blossoms, shall be of the same. 32. And six branches shall come out of its sides; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side; 33. Three ³calyxes of almond-flowers, *with* apple and blossom, on one branch;

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Spoons thereof, and covers thereof, and bowls thereof, to cover withal (or to pour out withal). ² His shaft and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers. ³ Bowls made like unto almonds.

dour of the sacred utensils. The *border* was to be “of one hand-breadth.” From 1 Kings vii. 26, compared with Jerem. lii. 21, it appears clearly that one hand-breadth is equal to the breadth of the *four fingers* of the hand, of course if closely pressed to each other; and hence the Vulgate translates here *four fingers*. The rings for the staves were probably under the enclosure in the corners, where it joins the feet; therefore, “over against the border.”—*With which the libations were made.* As the shew-bread was a kind of peace-offering, its oblation was naturally, like all sacrifices of this class, attended with wine-libations, for which the vessels mentioned in our text were necessary. The confession of Maimonides of his incapability of finding the signification of the shew-bread table proves the difficulty of the subject, which, however, disappears in a great measure, if this part of the Sanctuary is considered in connection with the general tendency of the holy structure. God creates every blessing, and bestows it upon man, from whom He requires nothing in return but a grateful acknowledgment of His gifts.

And this is, in the simplest manner, done by the shew-bread, for which again the table was necessary, just as the ark for the Tables of the Law. Hence we cannot sympathise with the explanation of Philippon, who, however ably he develops it, takes the shew-bread as the “bread of Divine guidance, or as the prosperity produced by God’s immediate providence.” Divine providence is a notion so spiritual and ideal, that it can scarcely be represented by cakes or bread. The table, with its loaves, reminds of God as the supporter and preserver of the world, which He provides with sustenance; not of God as the mysterious dispenser of fate; they are a thank-offering, intended to keep alive practical piety and thankfulness, not a metaphysical emblem, which would have been superfluous after the promise of the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire, which was to accompany Israel, as a symbol of Divine guidance, on all their journeys.

30. See p. 369. The shew-bread should be “before God always,” that is, before the vail which separates the Sanctuary from the Holy of Holies, the proper

and three calyxes of almond-flowers, *with* apple and blossom, on the other branch; so in the six branches which come out of the candlestick. 34. And on the candlestick *shall be* four calyxes of almond-flowers, *with* their apples and their blossoms. 35. And *there shall be* an apple under two branches of the same, and an apple under two branches of the same, according to the six branches which come out of the candlestick. 36. Their apples and their branches shall be of the same: all of it *shall be* one beaten-work of pure gold. 37. And thou shall make its lamps seven; and they shall ⁴put on its lamps, and ⁵light them to the side thereof. 38. And its ⁶snuffers and its fire-shovels *shall be of* pure gold. 39. *Of* a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels. 40. And see that thou make *them* after their pattern which was shown thee in the mount.

⁴ *Engl. Vers.*—Light, or cause to ascend.
against it.

⁵ That they may give light over
⁶ Tongs thereof and the snuff-dishes thereof.

residence of God. And from this reason they were unquestionably called in Hebrew, "the bread of the face," viz. of God; not because "their position was towards all sides of the Tabernacle," as several Rabbinical commentators believe. Rashbam understands: "fine bread, worthy to be placed before a king," after the questionable analogy of 1 Sam. i. 5.

31—40. *Description of the Candelabrum, its vessels and ornaments*, see p. 482. Among the ancient nations the Egyptians especially possessed a peculiar predilection for flowers, both natural and artificial; the sacred lotus is almost invariably introduced as an ornament, and, according to Pliny, they made fantastical flowers, which received the name *Egyptian flowers*.—It is well known that the almond-tree is a Biblical type for rapid growth and vigilance; it is among the first trees to produce buds and fruits (compare Numb. xvii. 16—24; Jer. i. 11); and the almonds symbolize, therefore, on the candlestick, which is itself the emblem of enlightenment and knowledge, the quick diffusion

and eternal efficacy of the latter through the word of God.—*And light them to the side thereof* (ver. 37). The shaft, as the principal part of the candelabrum, is used as identical with the candlestick itself (ver. 34); and our words mean: and he (the priest) shall light the lamps of the six branches so that their light falls to the side of the middle lamp, or that of the shaft; so that all the seven lamps seemed to have a connection and relation to each other; or that they might appear *one* (see xxv. 11. etc.).

39, 40. *Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it.* The second person, used in almost all preceding descriptions, changes here into the third person, according to a Hebrew idiom, implying an ellipsis: he to whom that duty devolves (here, the artist) shall make it. The candelabrum, *together with* the snuffers and the fire-shovels, weighed one talent of gold, as the addition: "with all these vessels," clearly shows. About the weight and value of a *talent* see note on xxi. 32.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SUMMARY.—God further describes the structure of the Tabernacle itself: the boards, with their sockets and bars; the magnificent internal hangings; the threefold exterior coverings of goats'-hair, rams'-skins, and badgers'-skins; the vail between the Sanctuary and Holy of Holies, and the hanging before the eastern front of the Tabernacle.

CHAP. XXVI. 1. And thou shalt make the ¹habitation *with* ten curtains *of* fine twined linen, and blue, and red, and crimson: *with* Cherubim ²of the work of the skilful weaver shalt thou make them. 2. The length of the one curtain *shall be* eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of the one curtain four cubits: one measure *shall be* for all the curtains. 3. Five curtains shall be coupled together one to another; and five curtains *shall be* coupled one to another. 4. And thou shalt make loops of blue upon the border of the one curtain at the edge in the coupling; and the same shalt thou do ³in the border of the uttermost curtain in the second coupling. 5. Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain which *is* ⁴in the second coupling; that the loops ⁵may correspond one with another. 6. And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold, and couple

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Tabernacle.

² Of cunning work.

³ In the uttermost edge of another curtain.

⁴ In the coupling of the second.

⁵ May take hold one of another.

1—6. *The ten internal curtains*, see p. 366. We must distinguish between the *habitation* in our verse, and the *tent* in ver. 7; the former expression describes, besides the frame-work, with the boards and columns, more the interior, the latter, more the external aspect of the holy structure; and the same difference exists, therefore, between the first and the three other coverings. The habitation was, by the mysterious forms of the Cherubim on its walls, manifested as the "habitation of God." The covering of goats'-hair gave it the appearance of a tent.—The *ten* curtains of the habitation denote its perfection and unity; they are, like the decalogue, divided into two halves; but they are again so combined, "that the habitation is *one*" (ver. 6).

—The distinction made in our text between stuffs with interwoven and embroidered figures, was known in very early times; and Pliny remarks: "Babylon was most celebrated for producing textures with various colours, and they were therefore called *Babylonian*.... To make similar stuffs with the needle is an invention of the Phrygians, whence they are known under the name of *Phrygian* manufactures." On the Egyptian monuments, both arts are represented; and it is known, that the sails of the pleasure-yachts of the Egyptian kings and grandees were embroidered with the figures of the phoenix, flowers, and other emblems, instances of which are found in the ruins of Thebes from so early a time as that of Rameses III. There is, in Hebrew, a

the curtains together with the taches, that the habitation may be one.—7. And thou shalt make curtains of goats' hair, to be ⁶a tent over the habitation: eleven curtains shalt thou make. 8. The length of the one curtain *shall be* thirty cubits, and the breadth of the one curtain four cubits: one measure *shall be* to the eleven curtains. 9. And thou shalt couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and shalt ⁷roll up the sixth curtain in the forefront of the Tabernacle. 10. And thou shalt make fifty loops on the border of the one curtain *which is* the uttermost in the coupling, and fifty loops ⁸on the border of the curtain in the second coupling. 11. And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass, and put the taches into the loops, and couple the tent together, that it may be one. 12. And the superfluity which remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half-curtain which remaineth, shall hang over the backside of the Tabernacle. 13. And the cubit on the one side, and the cubit on the other side of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the Tabernacle, on this side and on that side, to cover it.—14. And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams'-skins dyed

⁶ *Engl. Vers.*—Covering. ⁷ Double. ⁸ In the edge of the curtain which completh the second.

third expression (xxviii. 32, etc.), which signifies merely the tissue with the thread of one colour.—Both weaving and embroidering were, in Egypt, occupations of men; the weavers in Panopolis, Arsinoe, Pelusium, and Alexandria, were renowned in different periods; on the monuments, weaving men are frequently met with; if women were engaged in the same pursuits, it was considered an exception; their peculiar occupation seems to have been at the distaff (xxxv. 25); and, on the monuments, spinning men occur by far less frequently than spinning women.—The twenty-eight cubits of each curtain covered the ceiling and the north and south sides, only leaving one cubit open at the lower part of the sides (see p. 366).

7—14. *The three coverings of the tent,* see p. 367. There is no probability for the conjecture, that the goats'-hair covering also was put at the inner side of the Tabernacle; it was not necessary that the one cubit which was, on the north- and south-side, left uncovered by the first and more precious curtains, should be overhung; that was, on the contrary, the only part which showed that the boards were over-laid with gold; if that was also covered, the costly metal would have been wasted for no purpose. Besides, if the goats'-hair covering were put *under* the first hangings, it would contradict the clear statement of the seventh verse; to hang it *above* them, and so to hide them entirely, is an absurdity.

15—25. *The boards of the Tabernacle,*

red, and a covering above of badgers'-skins.—15. And thou shalt make the boards for the Tabernacle of acacia wood, standing up. 16. Ten cubits *shall be* the length of the board, and a cubit and a half *shall be* the breadth of one board. 17. Two tenons *shall there be* to one board, arranged one against another: thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the Tabernacle. 18. And thou shalt make the boards for the Tabernacle, twenty boards on the south side, southward. 19. And thou shalt make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards; two sockets under one board for its two tenons, and two sockets under another board for its two tenons. 20. And for the second side of the Tabernacle, on the north side, *there shall be* twenty boards: 21. And their forty sockets of silver; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board. 22. And for the ¹side of the Tabernacle westward thou shalt make six boards. 23. And two boards shalt thou make at the corners of the Tabernacle, in the two sides. 24. And they shall be ²double beneath, and at the same time they shall be double above, at the one ring: thus shall it be for them both; they shall be for the two corners. 25. And they shall be eight boards, and their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets; two sockets under the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Sides. ² Coupled together beneath, and they shall be coupled together above the head of it unto one ring.

see p. 366. The tenons were not fixed directly in the ground; for “the habitation of God should have no connection with earth”; but they were fitted into sockets; and these are inserted in the ground, so that one socket always corresponded with one tenon. Tradition gives to the sockets a length of six, and a breadth of three palms, and maintains, with improbability, that they were placed on the ground, which would have raised the whole structure by about one cubit.—The opinion, that the two boards at the corner did not form a right, but an obtuse angle, is to be rejected; for it would destroy the symmetry of the whole structure.

26—30. *The five bars*, see p. 367.

They were fitted into golden rings (ver. 29), except, perhaps, the middle bar, which was, according to the traditional explanation, passed through the boards themselves, which were, for this purpose, bored through. It is certain, that, as the middle bar is expressly stated to have “reached from end to end,” the others ran only along a part of the sides. The bars were especially necessary for giving the structure a greater compactness.

31—33. *The vail between the Holy and the Holy of Holies*, (see p. 367). It was hung up immediately beneath the golden taches of the inner covering, and thus formed, to the west, the Holy of Holies, ten cubits in length,

one board, and two sockets under the other board.—26. And thou shalt make bars *of* acacia wood; five for the boards of the one side of the Tabernacle, 27. And five bars for the boards of the other side of the Tabernacle, for ³the side westward. 28. And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end.—29. And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings *of* gold for places for the bars: and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold. 30. And thou shalt rear up the Tabernacle according to its manner which was shown thee in the mount.—31. And thou shalt make a vail *of* blue, and red, and crimson, and fine twined linen; of the work of the skilful weaver shall it be made, *with* Cherubim. 32. And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold: their hooks *shall be of* gold upon four sockets of silver. 33. And thou shalt hang up the vail under the taches, and shalt bring in thither, within the vail, the ark of the testimony: and the vail shall divide to you between the Holy and the Holy of Holies. 34. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat upon the ark of the testimony in the Holy of Holies. 35. And thou shalt set the table without the vail, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the Tabernacle to-

³ *Engl. Vers.*—The two sides.

and to the east, the Holy twenty cubits long. According to Jewish authorities, it was four fingers thick, to prevent any person penetrating with his eyes into the adytum.

34. Into the Holy of Holies was placed the ark, with the mercy-seat; and, of course, the Cherubim on the latter, which are, however, not expressly mentioned, as they formed one whole with it.

35. According to ancient interpreters, the table stood two and a half cubits from the northern side, the candlestick as distant from the southern side, between both, the altar of incense, and all three vessels occupied the middle of the Holy, that is, they were ten cubits from each of the two inner vails. Certainly,

the impression which this arrangement made on the entering priest must have been imposing enough to turn his mind at once to the holiest thoughts, and powerfully to remind him of his sublime duties, for which he was previously prepared by the sacred oil and the distinguishing garments. The Samaritan text inserts here the description of the altar of incense, from xxx. 1—10, and omits it in this latter place. But no ancient translation, nor any manuscript, offers a similar transposition; and, although we confess that that arrangement would be more regular, it is not the only one which the Biblical style admits; besides, xxx. 7—10 refer clearly to the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters, and would be almost un-

ward the south, and thou shalt put the table on the north-side. 36. And thou shalt make a hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and red, and crimson, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework. 37. And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, and their nails shall be of gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them.

intelligible in our place; the precepts concerning the altar of incense conclude the whole description of the holy vessels, because it implies the most sacred part of the daily functions of the priests.

36. The *vail at the eastern side*, which, according to Josephus, had, in inclement seasons, a linen cover, is not, like that between the two parts of the habitation, called *curtain*, but simply *cover*, and is, in several points, distinguished from it: it was not woven, but embroidered (see on vers. 1—6); no Cherubim were represented on it; it rested on five instead of four columns; and the sockets of the latter were not of silver, but of brass. Most of these circumstances prove, that the vail between the Tabernacle and the Court was not intended as equally costly and equally sacred as that between the Holy and the Holy of Holies. The absence of the Cherubim is especially characteristic; they symbolize the nearness of God; everywhere in the interior of the Tabernacle they were visible—on the mercy-seat, on the interior hangings, on the western vail; without the structure, they were nowhere represented. But we abstain here, also, from indulging in speculations about the typical meaning of the numbers, metals, colours, etc., and its application on the proportions of the holy tent; the end of the three parts of the

structure: the Holy of Holies, the Sanctuary, and the Court, is self-evident; they represent the gradual approximation between God and Israel; in the Court, every individual approached God through the burnt-offerings; in the Sanctuary, the people came near God through its representatives, the priests; and, in the Holy of Holies, through the High-priest, the head of all the clerical functionaries: further, in the Court, merely by an external offering; in the Sanctuary, by the light of truth and by the ardour of faith; and, in the Holy of Holies, by revelation and atonement, those two highest means of connection between God and man. Recent commentators even have had the courage to follow the foot-steps of Baehr; they could not hope safely to gain the ports where this sagacious scholar wrecked, and their laborious efforts have only tended to encumber Biblical criticism with an additional burden of sophistical conjectures and mysterious combinations, convincing to none except their sanguine framers. The word of God is profound; but it is vain to penetrate into subjects for which it gives itself no clue. The Law is written for man and for his use, to serve as an instrument of his salvation; the leading ideas can, therefore, not be so hidden or obscure that they permit opposite interpretations; what is not clearly alluded to is forced and spurious.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SUMMARY.—The altar of burnt-offerings, with its utensils, and the Court which surrounds the Tabernacle are described. The use of pure olive-oil for the eternal light is commanded, and this service is for ever entrusted to Aaron and his descendants.

AND thou shalt make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits the length, and five cubits the breadth; the altar shall be square; and its height *shall be* three cubits. 2. And thou shalt make its horns upon its four corners; its horns shall be of the same: and thou shalt overlay it with brass. 3. And thou shalt make ^{its} pots to remove its ashes, and its shovels, and its basins, and its flesh-hooks, and its fire-shovels; all the vessels thereof thou shalt make *of* brass. 4. And thou shalt make for it a grate of net-work *of* brass; and upon the net thou shalt make four brazen rings in its four corners. 5. And thou shalt put it under the border beneath, that the net may reach to the midst of the altar. 6. And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves of acacia wood, and overlay them with brass. 7. And the staves shall be put into the rings, and the staves shall be

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Its pans to receive.

1—8. The altar of burnt-offerings, see p. 371. It is also called “the brass altar,” because it was overlaid with this metal, and “the outer altar,” because its place was without the habitation, in the Court.—Its horns shall form one whole with the frame-work and the brass covering of the altar itself, as was also commanded with regard to the mercy-seat and the Cherubim (xxv. 19). On these horns the blood of the sin-offerings was sprinkled (Lev. iv. 7, etc.); they were seized by the persecuted, who had sought refuge at the altar (1 Kings i. 50); perhaps also the sacrificial animals were fastened on them (Psalm cxviii. 27). The altars of almost all ancient nations were frequently provided with horns; they were not seldom as trophies, entirely constructed of the horns of the sacrifices; and the representations of Egyptian and other Eastern altars show the same peculiarity. The horns are a symbol of power, of protection, and help; and at the same time of glory and salvation; they represent, therefore, significantly the whole meaning and end of the sacrifices; and they manifest that that salvation is effected through

animals. And hence all the members of the house of Israel were permitted access not only to the Court, which stood uncovered, free in the air, but to this altar; this was the first step towards a unity between God and man; and here the individual might sufficiently purify himself from guilt and sin, to participate in the national unity between God and Israel, represented through the priests in the interior of the holy habitation.—The altar was to be “hollow with boards,” but was, in accordance with xx. 21, naturally filled with earth, not only the upper part, whilst the lower one was hollow, as Michaelis believes, but entirely. The wooden frame-work was carried by the Israelites on their journeys, whilst the earth remained perhaps, as a mark of their stations, just as the frame-work was during the journeys the emblem of the altar rather than this implement itself; for the earth constituted the altar. It is, therefore, erroneous, if Clarke writes: “The altar seems to have been a kind of frame-work, and to have had nothing solid in the inside, and only covered with the grating of the top.” Just the top, on

upon the two sides of the altar¹ in carrying it. 8. Hollow with boards shalt thou make it; as it was shown thee in the mount, so shall they make *it*.—9. And thou shalt make the Court of the Tabernacle: for the south-side southward *there shall be* hangings for the Court of fine twined linen of one hundred cubits long for one side: 10. ²And its pillars *shall be* twenty, and their sockets, twenty, of brass; the hooks of the pillars, and their rods, of silver. 11. And likewise for the north-side in length *there shall be* hangings of one hundred cubits long, and its pillars twenty, and their sockets twenty of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their rods, of silver. 12. And *for* the breadth of the Court on the west-side *shall be* hangings of fifty cubits: their pillars ten, and their sockets ten. 13. And the breadth of the Court on the east-side eastward *shall be* fifty cubits. 14. The hangings on one side *of the gate shall be* fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three; 15. And on the other side *shall be* hangings fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three. 16. And for the gate of the Court *shall be* a hanging of twenty cubits, of blue, and red, and crimson, and fine twined linen, the work of the embroiderer; *and* their pillars *shall be* four, and their sockets four. 17. All the pillars round about the Court *shall be* united with rods of silver; their hooks *shall be of*

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—To bear it.

² And the twenty pillars thereof and their twenty sockets *shall be* of brass.

which the sacrifices were burnt, consisted of earth; and the grating was not on the top, but round the sides, beneath the border. The wooden frame was protected against the injurious influence of the fire, within by the earth, and without by the metal with which it was covered, and which was, perhaps, at the top a little thicker, and bent round the wood. On the altar fire was always maintained (Lev. vi. 6). Whether it had a bottom of the same materials as the sides is uncertain. The ashes were placed on the eastern side of the altar; to the west stood the brazen laver, and to the south,

according to tradition, the sloping dam which led up to the upper surface. As several parts of the altar of burnt-offerings are indeed obscure, the text refers to the prototype which Moses had seen on the mountain, and which he is commanded to imitate.

9—19. The Court, see p. 371. The hangings are frequently explained to have been made “like the sails of a ship, meshy, not woven.” But although these hangings were only five cubits high (ver. 18) and covered only half the height of the Tabernacle; and although it might thus not appear inappropriate to suppose,

silver, and their sockets *of* brass. 18. The length of the Court *shall be* one hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty everywhere, and the height five cubits *of* fine twined linen, and their sockets *of* brass. 19. All the vessels of the Tabernacle in all its service, and all its pins, and all the pins of the Court, *shall be of* brass.

20. And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure beaten olive-oil for the light, to put on the lamps for ever. 21. In the ¹Tent of Meeting without the vail, which *is* before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall arrange it from evening to morning before the Lord: *it shall be* a statute for ever to your generations, on the part of the children of Israel.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Tabernacle of the Congregation.

that the other half was likewise partly visible by the meshes of the net-work: the statement, that those hangings were of *twined* linen precludes that conception (see p. 374).

20, 21. About the "pure beaten olive-oil," to be used for the candelabrum, see p. 370. The light was to burn from evening to morning (xxx. 8), and a quantity of oil sufficient for this purpose (according to tradition, half a log) was, in the evening, to be put into the lamps. But, in order to make it literally "a perpetual light," and because no sky-light fell into the structure, surrounded as it

was with a fourfold covering, it seems to have been customary in the service of the temple, that one light at least was always burning (see *ibid.*; compare, however, 1 Sam. iii. 3); although the word perpetual, if added to sacrifices or other sacred functions, means merely such as recur regularly and at appointed times (Num. iv. 16, etc.). In the "tent of meeting," or the "tent of appointment" (not the "tabernacle of the congregation"), God promises to meet Moses and Aaron, through His revelations; it was not directly a place of assembly for the people (see p. 377; compare xxv. 22; xxix. 42).

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SUMMARY.—Aaron and his sons are appointed priests, and their official garments described; namely, for the common priests: 1. the tesselated tunic; 2. the drawers; 3. the girdle; 4. the turban; to which were added, for the High-priest: 5. the robe; 6. the ephod; 7. the breast-plate, with the Urim and Thummim; and, 8. the mitre, with the golden plate. The priests are commanded never to perform the service without any of these prescribed garments; and punishment of death is threatened to him who trespasses this command.

AND bring ¹thou near to thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him from among the children of Israel, ²to initiate him to my service, *namely*,

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Take thou. ² That he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

1. The Israelites had been selected by God among all the nations of the earth to be His peculiar people (xix. 5; compare Hos. iv. 6); God has brought them to

Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Elazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. 2. And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and ¹distinction. 3. And thou shalt speak to ²all *who have* a wise heart, which I have

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Beauty.

² All that are wise-hearted, which I have filled.

Himself (ver. 4), whereas before they were as distant from Him as all the idol-worshippers; He destined them to be a holy people, a kingdom of priests (ver. 6); all the laws and institutions which He ordained tended only to prepare them for this vocation, to realize this promise. What the Israelites were among the nations, were the Levites among the tribes of the Hebrews. God calls Israel His first-born son; and the Levites represent, in Israel, the first-born sons (note on xiii. 2). Israel is the host, the army, the champion of God; and in Israel again, the Levites are His troops, who fight His battles (xxxii. 28; Deut. xxxiii. 8—11, etc.). But, among the Levites, the family of Aaron is singled out for the immediate servants of God; the other branches of this tribe are only the ministers, the menials of the Aaronites; the latter alone represent Israel as a kingdom of priests; they are more properly the connecting link between God and Israel; and, therefore, our verse uses, with regard to Aaron and his sons, the same significant idea of *bringing near*, with which the election of Israel as the peculiar people was designated (chap. xix.; compare Lev. vii. 35; x. 3); and as there the separation took place "from all the nations," so here, "from the midst of Israel," which, though consecrated in its totality, requires mediators exclusively and entirely devoted to sanctification and religious service. And in order to give to this idea of priestly sanctity the most concrete shape of which it is capable, God distinguished and separated among the Aaronites again one individual, the High-priest, who united in his person, and represented in a striking manner, the whole sum of the theocratical truths; he was the head of the state, its spiritual king; his mere appear-

ance recalled forcibly the centre and kernel of the Mosaic doctrines; his office symbolized the internal relation between God and Israel, the duties of the individual, and the great historical mission of the nation. Hence the minuteness is explicable with which the official robes of the priests are ordered and described; they were intended to represent sublime and important ideas; they were auxiliary means for impressing upon the people the vocation of Israel; they can, therefore, not be insignificant, accidental, or arbitrary; we are not only entitled, but compelled, to search after the ideas embodied in the garments; and we reject at once and entirely the views of those who see, in the complicated priestly dress, nothing but an aggregate of unconnected pieces, without meaning or ulterior aim, only calculated to enhance the pomp of the priests, and thus to awe by external splendour the impressive senses of the multitude.—About the sons of Aaron, see vi. 23, where they are enumerated in the same order as in our verse.

2. The garments of Aaron are called holy, because they were necessarily worn during the performance of his official functions; they were as indispensable for the priests as the priests were indispensable for the Tabernacle; and everything is holy which stands in connection with the sacred habitation of God. If, therefore, the Tabernacle has any meaning beyond a mere tent of boards and curtains, the priestly robes must be drawn into the same circle of ideas. But these robes are further intended to be "for glory and for beauty;" they are the external marks of distinction; they manifest him who wears them as conspicuous in dignity and holiness; they represent his elevation and his important spiritual privileges.

filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, and to initiate him to my service. 4. And these *are* the garments which they shall make: a breast-plate, and an ephod, and a robe, and ³a

³ *Engl. Vers.*—Embroidered coat.

3. Every faculty, every knowledge which man possesses, is a gift of God; without His assistance man is unable to attain either at moral perfection or intellectual clearness; even the ability of the workman is a gracious present of the Lord, who "fills the heart with the spirit of wisdom." In Biblical phraseology the *heart* is considered as the seat of the *mental* powers, as well as of feeling; "men of heart" are men of intelligence. Now, the artists and workmen are not filled with that divine spirit for the special purpose of preparing the priestly robes, but Moses is ordered to invite all those who feel in themselves the ability, to assist in this holy work.

4. In the summary of this chapter we have enumerated the eight parts of the priestly dress. Now, it is at least remarkable, that the robes of the common priest consisted of four parts, but those of the High-priest of twice four, and that the latter, on the Day of Atonement, when he performed the most important acts of his office, changed four pieces for four others. It is a matter of course, that the different commentators apply to the garments of the priests the same principles of symbolical explanation which they endeavoured to demonstrate in the Holy Tabernacle, and we meet here, indeed, with the same variety of opinions, the same sagacity and learning, and the same artificiality and futility. We find the cosmical, rabbinical, typical and modern negative conception; and Baehr has continued his eloquent argumentations, although, on the whole, his results are here by far happier than in his theory on the Tabernacle (see, however, *infra*). But the number four typifies to him divine revelation, and their garments show, therefore, that they are "the living instruments of revelation," because "their ser-

vice is entirely bound to the Tabernacle, which is the place of testimony and revelation." But it is impossible to sympathize with this exposition; the priests are the representatives of the people rather than of God; they bring the sentiments of Israel before God, not the will of God before Israel; not to reveal, but to obey, is their office. If we are to seek any meaning in the number four, it is that of completeness and entirety; the square is closed from all sides, it is symmetrical and whole; and thus the fourfold parts of the priestly dress may point to its perfection and completeness; the priest is *entirely clothed in holiness*; all worldly meditations, all profane feelings are banished, and the mind and the heart are exclusively directed to God and to sanctity. Hence are explicable phrases like: "he clothed himself with cursing like with his garment" (Psalm cix. 18); or, "he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke (Isa. lix. 17)."

The first of the priestly garments is the TUNIC. It was probably worn above the shirt, was a long close robe, without folds, covering the whole body, and reaching down to the feet, with sleeves; it was of linen, and formed, no doubt, one whole, with an aperture at the upper part for the neck; it was woven (xxxix. 27), and, probably, as one entire piece, without the application of a needle; for this art of weaving whole garments was perfectly familiar to different ancient nations, and is, by Josephus, alluded to with regard to another part of the priestly dress. It is generally qualified by an epithet, which means, most likely, *tessellated*, so that the forms of squares were interwoven in the garment; the sexagonal form, which Maimonides supposes, like the cells of the ruminating beasts, is by no

tessellated tunic, a mitre and a girdle; and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother and his sons,

means plausible. The purpose and meaning of this vestment is self-evident; it is of a white colour, which typifies purity; it is of fine linen or byssus, which is the emblem of religious sanctity; it is entire, to represent the priest as entirely clothed in purity and sanctity; it has the square ornaments interwoven which point again to the completeness of this garment, which is undoubtedly the most important part of the priestly dress. Baehr calls it the "garment of salvation, of righteousness, of peace, of life, of heavenly light," and he arrives at these significations by the same specious deductions of which we have already given sufficient specimens.

II. Over the tunic the GIRDLE was tied. Although the girdle formed an indispensable part of the Oriental dress (see note on xii. 11), it is more especially the symbol of readiness, of office, and of appointment to some duties (Isaiah xxii. 21, etc.); and as the tunic of the priest was close and without folds, it was scarcely required to fasten it; and this is another reason which justifies us in assigning to the girdle a more internal meaning. It was manufactured of linen, with blue and red and crimson, and was embroidered with figures, quite like the vail of the Court and Sanctuary, and it is thus sufficiently marked and characterized as belonging to the holy service. Josephus (*loc. cit.*) remarks: "The beginning of its circumvolution is at the breast; and when it has gone often round, it is there tied, and hangs loosely thence down to the ancles: I mean this, all the time the priest is not engaged in any laborious service, for in this position it appears in the most agreeable manner to the spectators; but when he is obliged to assist at offering sacrifices, and to do the appointed service, that he may not be hindered in his operations by its motion, he throws it to the left, and bears it on his shoulder" (compare Ezek. xlv. 18).

According to tradition, the girdle was three fingers wide, and thirty-two cubits long. At present, Oriental girdles are about half a foot wide, and are still, as they were formerly, often an article of great luxury, covered with jewels and costly embroidery. It served frequently as a receptacle of the sword, writing-materials, and the purse. So important, and so specific a sign of the clerical office was the girdle considered, that, in later times, the priests were not permitted to wear it during their ordinary occupations, whilst this permission was granted them with regard to all other parts of the sacred dress.

III. The third part of the priestly garments is generally called BREECHES, which is, however, scarcely an adequate rendering of the Hebrew term used for it; it is explained in the text as a garment "to cover the flesh of nakedness" (ver. 42), or simply, "to be on the flesh" (Lev. xvi. 4); they are further described to reach "from the loins to the thighs"; and Josephus speaks of them in the following manner: "It is a girdle composed of fine twined linen, and is put about the privy parts; the feet are inserted into them, in the manner of breeches; but above half of it is cut off, and it ends at the thighs, and is there tied fast" (Antiq. III. vii. 1). The Rabbins assert that they reached to the knees, and were above the flanks fastened by ribbons. From all this it is evident, that the drawers were rather a vesture intended to cover the *pudenda*, than breeches made for the whole lower part of the body. Breeches were, indeed, unnecessary for the priests; for 1. the close tunic prevented every possibility of accidental indecency, which was still more precluded 2. by the law, that no steps should lead up to the altar (xx. 26; see note there); and hence it is also obvious, that the drawers were more a symbol than a garment. But this

to initiate him to my office. 5. And they shall take ¹the gold, and the blue, and the red, and the crimson, and the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet.

typical meaning offers itself spontaneously by the consideration, that the flesh is the emblem, not only of frailty and weakness, but of sensuality, of sin, and of worldly wishes; and the priest, in wearing the drawers over the pudenda, which are preeminently the seat of carnal desires, was to be reminded of his spiritual duties, of sanctity and piety of life. Thus this part of the garments is in harmony with the significance of the whole priestly attire.

IV. To complete the dress of the common priest a covering for the head was necessary, and this is called *TURBAN*. It was likewise of byssus, the usual material of the sacred dress; and as the head is the seat of reflection, it was especially required to show that it was likewise consecrated; the thoughts of the priests were to be hallowed, and all their ideas directed to the fountain of truth. Therefore the priests were expressly forbidden to uncover their heads (Lev. x. 6), for then one essential part of their holiness would have been wanting. In fact, the Orientals seem to have given to the covering of the head especially most significant shapes, many of which are still preserved on Egyptian monuments; even in Isaiah lix. 17, "a helmet of help" is mentioned. The form of the turban is uncertain; we are only informed that it was fastened to the head by means of ribbons, to prevent its falling off (xxix. 9; Lev. viii. 13). Josephus describes it thus: "Upon the head he wears a cap, not of a conical form, nor encircling the whole head, but still covering more than half of it; it is called *Masnaemphthes*, and its make is such that it seems to be a crown, being made of thick swathes, but the texture is of linen; and it is doubled round many times, and sewed together: besides which, a piece of fine linen covers the whole cap from the upper part, and reaches down to the forehead,

and hides the seams of the swathes, which would otherwise appear indecently; this adheres close upon the solid part of the head, and is thereto so firmly fixed, that it may not fall off during the sacred service of the sacrifices" (Antiq. III. vii. 3). Whatever may be judged of this description of Josephus in general, it is obvious that he, in some respects at least, confounds the head-covering of the ordinary priests with that of the High-priest; and this is a proof, how cautious we ought to be in following Josephus, although himself a priest, in the description of the sacred garments, which might, in his time, have been considerably modified. Very characteristic for the meaning of the head-covering is further the additional ornament on the tiara of the High-priest. A plate of gold frequently called *crown*, according to tradition two fingers wide, and probably only reaching from one temple to the other, was by means of a blue ribbon fastened on the mitre, but probably so that it was partly (but not entirely) on the forehead; on it the most significant words were engraven: *HOLINESS TO THE LORD*, that is, he who wears it is entirely devoted to God, and it is his mission to elevate the people to the same sanctity. The forehead is not only considered the mark of intelligence, but is also the most conspicuous part of the head; there the High-priest, who was himself the impersonification of the holy people, of the kingdom of priests, wore the diadem—the emblem of royalty—with that inscription, which condensed in a few momentous words the whole end, the complete sum of the revealed religion. The plate of the mitre is, therefore, the culminating point of the whole pontifical attire; it mirrors forth, both in its form, and its material, and in the majestic words inscribed on it, the grand task of the High-priest, and through him of the Hebrew nation; and the

fine linen.—6. And they shall make the *EPHOD* of gold, blue, and red, crimson, and fine twined linen, of the work of the skilful weaver. 7. It shall have two shoulder-pieces joined at the two ends thereof, and so it shall be joined together. 8. And the ¹band of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same workmanship, and of the same *piece*; of gold, blue, and red, and crimson, and fine twined linen. 9. And thou shalt take two onyx-stones,

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Curious girdle.

original meaning of the Hebrew word, “shining or splendour” is, at the same time, intended to single out this ornament as that which is the brightest, the most striking of the High-priest’s vesture.

These are the garments of the common priests. We have already remarked on iii. 5, that it was an almost universal practice, except, perhaps, among the Egyptians, not to enter holy places with covered feet, much less to perform in the temples or sanctuaries sacred functions. Both this fact, and the silence of the text, justify the supposition, that the Hebrew priests were also commanded to minister in the Tabernacle unshod; a fact which is unanimously confirmed by tradition. And this circumstance alone suffices to refute the assumption of many modern critics, that the sacred vestures were only intended to produce, by their costliness, a dazzling effect; for it is well known what degree of luxury was, by the Orientals, lavished on the adornment of their shoes and sandals; and a legislator, whose only end was pomp, would not have omitted to avail himself of that means to increase it. To the reasons adduced in the note on iii. 5, for that far-spread custom, we add one of Bachr, which is more plausible at first glance, than on a more accurate examination. He believes, that, because shoes are intended to protect the feet from uncleanness, they seem to suppose that the person who wears them stands on an unclean place; and if he wishes, therefore, to intimate that he considers it pure or holy, and that he cannot defile himself on it,

he takes off the shoes; if he approaches it with shoes, it would virtually be a declaration that he does not think it clean. However, this argument seems too artificial to be attributed to the unsophisticated minds of the ancient nations; and it is not in accordance with iii. 5, or Josh. v. 15. Being unshod was obviously considered a mark of humility and contrition; and hence mourners took off their sandals (2 Sam. xv. 30; see p. 34; Ezek. xxiv. 17, 23).—In the following verses, we shall explain the specific garments of the High-priest, except the mitre; which we were, by its close connection with the turban, obliged to anticipate in the preceding notes.

5. The workmen shall themselves receive the costly materials directly from the hands of the people; unlimited confidence was rested in their integrity, for they were men filled with the “spirit of wisdom,” or, which is identical with it, penetrated “with the fear of God.”

6—13. V. THE EPHOD includes many characteristic points of the pontifical attire, and thereby manifests the internal character of the High-priest’s office. 1. It was made of the work of the skilful weaver (see p. 390); and is thus, at once, discernible as appertaining to the Holy of Holies, the veil of which was of the same distinguished workmanship. The High-priest alone was allowed to enter into the immediate presence of the Ark of the Testimony; to the representative of the theocratical community alone could the privilege be granted of communing with the

and thou shalt engrave on them the names of the children of Israel. 10. Six of their names on the one stone, and the remaining six names on the second stone, according to their birth. 11. *With* the work of the engraver in stone, *like* the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones, according to the names of the children of Israel; thou shalt make them set in sockets of gold. 12. And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod *for* stones of memorial to the children of Israel;

invisible King. A threefold climax in the workmanship is here obvious; the tunic was simply the work of the weaver; the girdle was the work of the embroiderer; whilst the ephod was prepared with the highest kind of texture. The Cherubim were not interwoven in the ephod, because they would have had no meaning in the garments of an official who did not represent the nearness of God, but who was only to prepare the people for it. But, 2. Besides the materials used for the vail of the Holy of Holies, gold threads were applied in the ephod, which, like the golden plate on the mitre, point to the sovereignty of the High-priest, who was the spiritual king of the nation; for gold is generally the emblem of regal power. The garments of the High-priest in general are called the "golden garments"; and, indeed, no part of them was without this metal. A shield of similar workmanship is described by Herodotus iii. 47; it was presented to the Lacedaemonians by the Egyptian king, Amasis. The ephod had no sleeves, and was to consist of two parts, called "shoulder-pieces," one of which covered the back, the other the breast and the upper part of the body. There, where they were united on the shoulders, two, probably square, onyx-stones, set in gold, were to be fixed, on which the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were to be engraved, six on each stone, according to the age; and the High-priest was to wear these stones as "stones of memorial" for the children of Israel, when he

stood before God. The significance of this arrangement is self-evident. The High-priest represented Israel before God; the stones were, therefore, for the people, who saw them and their names engraved on them, a memorial that the High-priest officiated in their name; that he interceded in their favour; that he strove to expiate their sins and to reconcile them with their Creator, from whom they had swerved by their transgressions. The stones with the names on them were, therefore, for every individual an earnest admonition to render himself, by repentance and atonement, worthy of that reconciliation; for the prayers and the sacrifices of the High-priest are efficacious only in so far as the people itself shows a craving after the restoration of that blissful harmony.—Less appropriate are the explanations, that the stones are a memorial to recall to God the memory of the piety of Israel and of the merits of the patriarchs; or that they are to remind Aaron, that he stands before God in the name of the twelve tribes; this latter conviction was incessantly impressed upon Aaron's mind by the whole nature of his office, and by the character of his functions.

The "shoulder" is a natural symbol of eminence and elevation; that which is worn on the shoulders is conspicuous, obvious to all; therefore the holy vessels were, during the journeys of the Israelites, carried on the shoulders. Now the whole ephod was only intended as a garment for the two onyx-stones with the names of the twelve tribes, just

and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial.—13. And thou shalt make sockets of gold; 14. And two chains ¹of pure gold

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—At the ends; of wreathen-work.

as the ark was only made in order to receive the Tables of the Law, or the shew-bread table for the shew-bread; the whole end and tendency of the ephod is comprised in the concluding words: “and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord, upon his two shoulders for a memorial” (ver. 12); and as those stones and the names were to remind Israel of the duties of self-examination and repentance, they were appropriately worn on the shoulders, where they were prominently visible to all. It requires, at present, scarcely any proof to show the great antiquity of the art of engraving. That it was familiar to the ancient Indians, Ethiopians, and Egyptians, is indubitable; both in seals and in rings figures and words were engraved; and several specimens have been discovered dating from very remote periods (Gen. xxxviii. 18; xli. 42). Equally popular and ancient is the art of setting precious stones (ver. 11); and many articles of gold, inlaid with jewels, have been found in Egypt. About onyx-stone, see *infra*, p. 538.

4. The ephod, in order to remain close to the body, required a girdle, and it is commanded that this girdle shall be of the same costly materials as the ephod itself, and that it shall form one whole with it, or that it shall be woven out of the same piece (ver. 8); we must, therefore, assume, that a band was annexed on either side of the ephod, probably more on the lower part.—Josephus describes the ephod thus: “It resembles the Epomis of the Greeks. It was made in the following manner: it was woven to the depth of a cubit, of several colours, with gold intermixed, but embroidered; but it left the middle of the breast uncovered; it was made with sleeves also; nor did it appear to be at all differently made from a short coat.

There were also two sardonyxes upon the ephod, at the shoulders, to fasten it, in the nature of buttons, having each end running to the sardonyxes of gold that they might be buttoned by them. On these were engraven the names of the sons of Jacob, in the letters of our own country, and in our own tongue, six on each of the stones, on either side, and the elder sons' names were on the right shoulder” [compare *Talmud*, Sot. 36; Rashi, on ver. 10]. In these statements two points seem to disagree with the description of the text: *a.* The ephod had certainly no sleeves; those of the tunic alone, which were of the characteristic priestly material, fine linen, and contained the significant squares in their texture, covered the arms of the High-priest; and, *b.* It is improbable that the ephod left a void in the middle of the breast, to insert there the breast-plate, as Josephus continues; for thereby the ephod would not only have lost its wholeness, which it was intended to preserve, even by wearing the girdle on it, but the breast-plate could scarcely be called, with propriety, the “breastplate of the ephod” if its place was not on the ephod itself. We will not omit to add what the same writer remarks on the use and efficacy of the two onyxes of the ephod: “As to those stones which the High-priest bore on his shoulders.... the one of them shone when God was present at their sacrifices; I mean that which was in the nature of a button on his right shoulder, bright rays darting out thence, and being seen even by those who were very remote, which splendour yet was not before natural to the stone. This has appeared a wonderful thing to those who have not so far indulged themselves in philosophy as to despise Divine Revelation.” Josephus mentions a similar miraculous intervention with respect to the Urim and

shalt thou make of wreathen work, twisted in the manner of ropes, and thou shalt put the wreathen chains into the sockets.—15. And thou shalt make the BREASTPLATE¹ OF

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Of judgment.

Thummim, which we shall notice in due place; but he confesses that he has never himself witnessed that wonder, “for,” says he, “that supernatural shining ceased two hundred years before I composed this book [that is, since John Hyrcanus], God having been displeased at the transgression of His laws” (*Antiq. III. viii. 9*).—It is known, that later the common priests also wore ephods, but they were merely of linen, (1 Sam. ii. 18; xxii. 18; 2 Sam. vi. 14).

14—30. VI. THE BREAST-PLATE which was of the same skilful work as the ephod (ver. 15), and of the same costly materials, is the uppermost of the pontifical garments, and must, therefore, necessarily be smaller than the ephod, which it was intended to cover only on one part, namely, “on the heart” (vers. 29, 30). Its dimensions are stated at one span (half a cubit) in length, and one span in breadth; but as it was to be doubled and square, (ver. 16), it was, in fact, two spans long, and one span wide, half of the length being turned back, so that it had the form of a bag open everywhere except at the nether side. In order to join the two parts at the upper side, two rings were fixed at the two ends (ver. 28). But these rings served at the same time, to fasten the breast-plate to the ephod; for two chains of wreathen work, or, more distinctly, twisted of gold-threads in the manner of ropes, were put into them, and then passed into the ouches or sockets of the two onyx-stones on the shoulders of the ephod (vers. 24, 25); and, in order to prevent every loosening of the breast-plate, two other rings were fixed under it over the border (ver. 26), and two more on the ephod near the places whence the girdle issued (ver. 27); and then a ribbon of blue was passed from the rings of

the breast-plate through those of the ephod, so that the former was tied to the latter, and a moving from its place was impossible. Thus, it is unquestionable, that the ephod and the breast-plate were intended to form one whole, which unity is symbolized by the wreathen, rope-like chains of gold, whilst the latter four rings, with the blue ribbon, were necessarily required if both vestures should in all parts be equally close to each other. But it would be artificial to seek in this unity a hidden typical meaning, as, for instance, Baehr has endeavoured to discover. He believes, that the ephod and breast-plate together represent the royalty of the High-priest, but so that the former is an emblem of government, the latter of jurisdiction, which two functions were, in ancient monarchies, united in the person of the sovereign. However, the sacred text urges, with regard to the Tabernacle, more than once, that it should be considered as *one*, or, as a whole, which implies the idea that no part is superfluous or unmeaning. The connection of the ephod and breast-plate recall the same notion; the pontifical attire was to be viewed as *one*, as serving to illustrate, in all its parts, the same principles and truths which were the end of the whole priesthood and its official duties; and that unity was appropriately indicated by the open and striking connection of the two uppermost parts of the vesture.

But, as the distinguishing characteristic of the breast-plate, it is commanded that twelve precious stones, in four equal rows, were to be set on it, and that on each stone the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel should be engraven. Nothing represents both the origin and destiny of man in a more striking and more beautiful manner than precious stones carefully worked out. Like the jewel, man is a

DECISION *with* the work of the skilful weaver, like the work of the ephod shalt thou make it; *of* gold, blue, and red, and crimson, and fine twined linen, shalt thou make it. 16. It shall be square *and* doubled; one span *shall be* its length, and one span its breadth. 17. And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, four rows of stones: the row of

child of the earth; but as this earthly frame encloses the breath of God and an eternal soul, it is a *precious* treasure in the eyes of God (Ps. cxvi. 15); He values man as bearing His image, and His indelible impress. But it is the aim of man to train himself from a creature of the earth into a denizen of heaven, to commute the gloom and heaviness inherent in matter into the aerial brightness which is the essence of the spirits; and the smiling splendour of the precious stones, which are, like him, taken from the same dark womb of the common mother, symbolize to him that internal regeneration, that ascending from earth to heaven, from impurity to purity, from worldliness to sanctity, which is the innermost tendency of the Mosaic dispensation. But, further, the jewels are, among all ancient nations, regarded as the foci of light, as the eyes of the earth; they are the emblems of the stars, which they rival in splendour; their brilliancy recalls the brightness of heaven; and if the names of the tribes were engraven on twelve stones, the hosts of Israel were reminded to strive after the *light* and the *purity* of the heavenly hosts.—If, therefore, the precious stones on the breast-plate were deeply significant we may conclude that the individual jewels for the different tribes had also a specific meaning. The more must we deplore the great uncertainty which prevails with regard to the identity of those gems. The ancient translators and commentators already differ widely in rendering and explaining them; and the kindred dialects offer, just in this instance, very little assistance. We have here endeavoured to compile a concise survey of the different conjectures proposed; that meaning which we have

placed first, has, in our opinion, the greatest relative probability.

I.—THE FIRST ROW.

1. CARNELIAN. The etymology facilitates the identification of this gem; for its Hebrew name is *odem*, which is derived from a root signifying “to be red;” and the interpretations of the Septuagint, Josephus, and Vulgate, by “sardius,” lead, likewise, to a gem of that colour. For the sardius, which received this name because it was first discovered in Sardis, although the sardius of Arabia and Babylon was of superior quality, is nearly related to the carnelian, to which this designation was given because its colour is similar to that of raw flesh; but, when held between the eye and the light, it appears of a deep blood-red; and its value depended on the degree of vividness which its red colour displayed. It is a variety of chalcedony, and belongs, therefore, to the flint family. It possesses a considerable degree of hardness, but is capable of being polished and cut; and the ancients engraved more frequently on it than, perhaps, on any other stone. A fine dark-red carnelian, called *El-Ahik*, is found in Yemen, near the town Damar; it is much worn by the Arabians as an ornament, on the fingers, arms, or on the girdle; and it is believed to stop the flux of blood, if applied to a fresh wound. And here we may remark, that, in the opinion of Ebn Ezra, every gem used for the breast-plate possesses some hidden virtue for healing a disease, either of the body or of the soul. Excellent specimens of carnelian are also found in Surat, a considerable town near the gulf of Cambay, in the north-western shores of India. Those discovered in Hindostan are first exposed to the sun for several weeks,

¹carnelian, topaz, and ²smaragd, *shall be* the first row. 18. And the second row *shall be* ³carbuncle, sapphire, and ⁴emerald. 19. And the third row, ligure, agate, and amethyst. 20. And the fourth row, ⁵chrysolite, and onyx, and jasper: they shall be mounted with gold in their

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Sardius. ² Carbuncle. ³ Emerald. ⁴ Diamond. ⁵ Beryl.

then heated in earthen pots, and thus they assume that lively red colour to which they owe their Hebrew name.—Others translate, less probably, *carbuncle*, or *garnet*.

2. TOPAZ, is, on account of its frequency in Ethiopia, also called *the topaz of Cush* in Job xxvii. 19, from which passage it is evident how highly the Hebrews prized it. It has its name (*pitdah*) probably, from the root *pita*, which signifies, in Sanscrit, *pale*. For the topaz is generally pale and yellowish, sometimes quite colourless, but not unfrequently greenish. Its dark shade passes sometimes over into carnation red, sometimes into lilac; whilst the pale shade passes into greyish, tincal, and celadon green. It is found in alluvial strata, and occurs in rhombic prisms. According to some ancient, mostly fabulous, accounts, it was especially obtained in the small island Topazos, in the Red Sea. It has been asserted that, the topaz of the ancients is our chrysolite; but it is, in all probability, identical with our gem of the same name.

2. SMARAGD. According to its Hebrew derivation (*barekethi*) it denotes a stone of a bright coruscant colour. It is a sort of precious corundum, of strong glass-lustre, a beautiful green colour, with many degrees of shade; it is pellucid, and causes a double refraction. Pliny enumerates twelve species of this stone. It is not rare in Egypt.

II.—THE SECOND ROW.

4. CARBUNCLE. It is of a deep red colour, with a mixture of scarlet. That name comprises several shining stones, of the flint family, which, especially if held up to the sun, lose their deep tinge and assume entirely the colour of a burning coal; to this class belong

the ruby, the garnet, spinel, and chiefly the Almandin, that is, the noble Oriental garnet, which is transparent, red, with a violet shade, and a strong vitreous lustre. The carbuncle is usually found pure, of an angular shape, and adhering to a heavy ferruginous stone of the emery kind.

5. SAPPHIRE; see note on xxiv.

10. The principal colour is blue, generally with a double refraction; some sapphires give forth a starry lustre with six rays on two opposite corners; they are called star-sapphires, and are considered peculiarly precious.

6. EMERALD. The etymology (from *halam*, to beat, to strike) leads us to suppose a hard stone. The emerald, which is of a green colour, of various depths is nearly as hard as the topaz, and stands next to the ruby in value. It is found in Peru and India. The Septuagint and Josephus understand onyx; others, with still less probability, jasper, which is unquestionably the last of the twelve stones on the High-priest's breast-plate; others, diamond; but it is more than doubtful whether the art of engraving on it was known to the ancients, who did not even understand how to cut the ruby.

III. THE THIRD ROW.

7. LIGURE. So called because it was first imported from Liguria, in northern Italy, is a variety of the hyacinth, which, like all minerals belonging to the family of Zircon, occurs in square prisms with pyramidal terminations. That the ligure is identical with the hyacinth is also confirmed by Epiphanius. It is transparent, red passing into yellow, quartz, vitreous, harder than smaragd, and loses its colour in the fire. Sometimes it is brownish and green.

settings. 21. And the stones shall be 'according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve; according to their names, *like* the engravings of a signet; every one according to its name shall there be, for the twelve tribes. 22. And thou shalt make on the breast-plate chains of wreathen work, twisted in the manner of ropes, *of* pure gold. 23. And thou shalt make upon the breast-plate two rings of gold, and shalt put the two rings upon the two ends of the breast-plate. 24. And thou shalt put the two wreathen *chains* of gold in the two rings *which are* on the ends of the breast-plate. 25. And *the other* two ends of

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—With.

8. AGATE is said to have been first discovered on the shores of the river Achates in Sicily, and hence to have received its name. It stood, in ancient times, in very high estimation, but gradually lost its value. It is a semi-pellucid, uncrystallized variety of quartz, is found in parallel or concentric layers of various colours, and presents different tints in the same specimen. The colours are finely arranged in stripes or bands; and hence we distinguish fortification agate, when those lines are in angular shapes, and resemble the design of a fortification, the Scotch pebble belongs to this species; and moss agate, when they are in mossy threads. The ancient artists, who used the agate very frequently for rings, seals, cups, and many other purposes, skilfully employed those natural lines for the various figures which they intended to represent. This was still more facilitated by the circumstance, that, in fact, the agate is generally a compound or mixed stone, consisting of quartz, chalcedony, carnelian, flint, jasper, etc., so that mostly two sorts of stone are united in the agate; and hence it has very various colours, with very different lines and spots, which form sometimes complete figures.

9. AMETHYST. The Hebrew word is, according to some expositors, derived from *chalam*, to dream, because it was believed, that it caused dreams to those

who wore it, whilst the Greek name was given to this stone from its supposed efficiency in protecting the wearer from intoxication; but Pliny mentions the opinion, that it was so designated because it imitates the colour of wine without reaching it. The amethyst is a sub-species of quartz; it is generally bluish violet of different degrees of intensity, but those of the East are sometimes deep red. The ancients knew five species, whilst, in modern times, two varieties are distinguished: the Oriental and Occidental amethyst; the former is by far harder and more precious than the latter. The best amethysts are found in India, Arabia, and Armenia; they occur generally in crystallized forms, in hexahedral prisms terminated by corresponding pyramids. Pliny calls them "easy for sculpturing;" and they were, indeed, very extensively wrought into rings, seals, and cameos.

IV. THE FOURTH ROW.

10. CHRYSOLITE. It owes its Hebrew name, *Tarshish*, to the circumstance that it was first found in Tartessus, that ancient city in Spain between the two mouths of the river Baetis (Guadalquivir). The Chrysolite is usually green, but with different degrees of shade; it is generally transparent, but often only translucent; in hardness it yields to quartz, but surpasses glass; it occurs sometimes in

the two wreathen *chains* thou shalt fasten in the two sockets, and put *them* on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod before it. 26. And thou shalt make two rings of gold, and thou shalt put them upon the two ends of the breast-plate in the border thereof, which *is* in the side of the ephod inward. 27. And thou shalt make two *other* rings of gold, and thou shalt put them upon the two shoulder-pieces of the ephod underneath, towards the forepart thereof, over against its joining, above the band of the ephod. 28. And they shall fasten the breast-plate by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a ribbon of blue, that *it* may be above the band of the ephod, and that the

crystals, sometimes in round pieces, sometimes in small shapeless pieces. Luther renders this gem *turkoi*s, a conjecture based only on the similarity with the Hebrew name; but it is certainly not *amber*, or *topaz*, as others have proposed.

11. *ONYX* is so called because its color resembles that of the human flesh under the nails. It is a kind of chalcedony of different colours, with stripes horizontally arranged; and parallel layers, used for making cameos. It was imported from the land of Havilah (Gen. ii. 12); was considered of great value (Job xxviii. 26), and formed an important article of commerce (Ezek. xxviii. 13). Josephus, Aquila, Luther, and others render *sardonyx*, which is nearly kindred to the *onyx*, but was, by the ancients, considered of peculiar value. The Septuagint in the Pentateuch, the Syriac translation, the Targumim, Saadiah, and many modern critics render *beryl*, which is of a pale, sea-green colour. But it is scarcely *sapphire*, or *ruby*, or *smaragd*.

12. *JASPER*. The Oriental jasper is generally of a bright green colour; sometimes clouded with white, or spotted with red or yellow; and was very highly prized. It belongs to the quartz family, and is found in numerous varieties. The Egyptian jasper, which is found loose in the sand, is brown, of various shades, disposed in concentric stripes, alternately

with black lines. It is frequently used for ornaments.

The same twelve stones are mentioned in xxxix. 10—13, and Rev. xxi. 19—20, where they are named as the foundations of the splendid pillars for the walls of the new Jerusalem; and nine of them are introduced in Ezek. xxviii. 3, in the description of the splendour of the king of Tyre (the gems of the third row are omitted). It is still customary to make a sort of rings, studded with those twelve stones, which are called the stones of the twelve months, or of health.—The order, in which the stones with their respective names were arranged on the breast-plate, was probably, as Josephus, Rashi, and others believe, according to the age of the children of Jacob, as on the ephod (see ver. 10); so that they followed each other in the following manner, the three stones of each row being of course arranged from right to left:

- | | |
|------|------------------------------------|
| I. | 1. Carnelian (<i>Reuben</i>). |
| | 2. Topaz (<i>Simeon</i>). |
| | 3. Smaragd (<i>Levi</i>). |
| II. | 4. Carbuncle (<i>Judah</i>). |
| | 5. Sapphire (<i>Dan</i>). |
| | 6. Emerald (<i>Naphthali</i>). |
| III. | 7. Ligure (<i>Gad</i>). |
| | 8. Agate (<i>Asher</i>). |
| | 9. Amethyst (<i>Issachar</i>). |
| IV. | 10. Chrysolite (<i>Zebulun</i>). |
| | 11. Onyx (<i>Joseph</i>). |
| | 12. Jasper (<i>Benjamin</i>). |

breast-plate be not losed from the ephod. 29. And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel on the breast-plate of decision upon his heart, when he goeth into

It is less probable, that the names were arranged according to the mothers (first the sons of Leah and Bilhah, and then those of Silpah and Rachel), or in the order of the encampment (I. Judah, Issachar, Zebulun; II. Reuben, Simeon, Gad; III. Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin; IV. Dan, Asher, Naphthali).

30. THE URIM AND THUMMIM.—One of the obscurest subjects connected with the holy service and the functions of the High-priest, is the nature of that part of the breast-plate which our text calls *Urim and Thummim*. Almost innumerable are the conjectures hazarded on this point, but we shall here, as it is our constant principle in all cases, take the sacred records as our only guide, fully convinced that this is the only possible manner of arriving at a well-established conclusion.

1. Our verse commands, to put on, or to, the breast-plate, the Urim and Thummim. It is necessary to observe, that the Hebrew text admits, quite unforcedly, the interpretation, that the Urim and Thummim were *externally* fixed to the breast-plate. The reason that it would have been improper to expose that holy object to the public gaze and thus, as it were to profane it, is untenable; for the Holy was accessible to every priest; the vail before the Holy of Holies contained the images of the sacred Cherubim in "the work of the skilful weaver," that is, so that they were visible on both sides; and thus every priest had permission and opportunity of seeing those mysterious symbols of the Divine presence. Why should it be forbidden to behold the Urim and Thummim of the High-priest? Were not those sublime words "Holiness to the Lord," conspicuously visible on the plate of his mitre? and as the High-priest wore his garments only in the Tabernacle, and deposited them, after the performance of his functions, in a cell appropriated for this purpose (Ezek. xliv. 19), how was a profanation possible?

2. In ver. 17, it is enjoined, that "settings of stones shall be set on the breast-plate." It is clear, beyond a doubt, that these stones also formed an ornament on the exterior surface of the breast-plate. Scarcely any critic of note has asserted that the costly stones with the names of the tribes skilfully engraved on them were hidden between the two halves of the breast-plate. Now, it is very difficult to conceive what relative position the Urim and Thummim, and the gems, occupied on the breast-plate; the sacred text, which is so minute in describing even the very rings and ribbons, cannot be supposed to be so markedly deficient in a very essential and important point.

3. We are, therefore, necessarily compelled to consider the *Urim and Thummim* identical with the precious stones; and the thirtieth verse is therefore a more specified qualification, or an epexegetis, to the seventeenth. That this is not against the genius of the Biblical style requires scarcely any proof. Our verse concludes the whole and detailed description of the breast-plate, and it is perfectly appropriate that it should contain a brief summary of the preceding exposition. It is obvious that it is, in this respect, quite analogous to ver. 12, where the end and nature of the ephod are similarly comprised in a few characteristic words. In giving to our verse this meaning, we do by no means attribute to the scriptural style "every possible perversity," as some critics have cried out, in an outburst of affected indignation, which they find it convenient to parade in lieu of arguments. In fact, our verse is not even superfluous after the seventeenth. In the latter, the principal stress lies on the manner in which the stones were to be prepared and arranged: they were to be set in four rows, in a certain fixed order, whilst, in our verse, it is prescribed that they were to be fastened on the breast-plate, that Aaron was to wear them on

the holy *place*, for a memorial before the Lord continually.
 30. And thou shalt put on the breast-plate of decision the
 URIM AND THE THUMMIM; and they shall be upon Aaron's

his heart, and that they had a certain significant relation with the people of Israel. We could mention many passages in which the style is by far more irregular; we refer only to xxv. 24, 25, where the "golden crown" is twice introduced, in a manner, that many believed, that two wreaths are prescribed for the shew-bread table, although, in fact, one only was commanded; to vi. 10—30, and x. 28—xi. 8, where the arrangement of the ideas is so unusual that even orthodox commentators suspected these passages to be a spurious aggregate of incoherent fragments. But we have, in the notes on those passages, endeavoured to vindicate their authenticity. In Levit. viii. 8, where all the parts of the pontifical robes are enumerated, the Urim and Thummim alone are mentioned, not the precious stones; and this is a stronger proof of the identity of both than many are willing to admit (compare xxxix. 8—21).

4. It would be strange indeed, that the sacred text should have left us in perfect ignorance concerning the character of the Urim and Thummim, which, as we shall presently see, were intended for a very remarkable purpose. It is generally averred, that that silence is intentional; that the nature and application of the Urim and Thummim belonged to the "mysterious discipline," which was, by secret and private tradition, propagated among the Aaronites; and that it would have been unbecoming if the sacred historian had revealed anything of this mystery. But where, throughout the whole Mosaic legislation, do we find an analogy to such mysterious concealment? It is the distinguishing mark of Mosaism, that the whole people, down to the lowest individual, shared the same knowledge, and was admitted to the same sources of information; that the priests had no exclusive privilege whatever; that they were merely the representatives of the first-born sons, in whose stead they were sub-

stituted (see note on xiii. 2); that Mosaism created no hierarchy, but a genuine theocracy; that, in fact, the Mosaic legislation constitutes a religious democracy on the basis of perfect equality, and that, therefore, a separate knowledge of one class was utterly excluded (see note on xix. 6). But what would have more seriously endangered this constitution, than if the people were placed in a blind dependance upon ecclesiastical arbitrariness in its most momentous situations? For

5. The end of the Urim and Thummim was, that the High-priest should, by their means, in critical and difficult questions which concerned the whole nation, explore and reveal the will of God; and the history of Israel offers several instances of this practice (Numb. xxvii. 21; 1 Sam. xxviii. 6; compare Ezra ii. 63; Nehem. vii. 65). From this circumstance the Choshen was denominated "the breast-plate of decision;" and with this name it is introduced in the very beginning of its description (in ver. 15). And this is another indirect reason for the identity of the twelve stones with the Urim and Thummim. Aaron was to wear the decision of the children of Israel on his heart (ver. 30); if the stones were different from this "decision" they could not have been omitted in this verse; and yet, on the other hand, twelve of the most precious jewels, individually selected after a certain plan, with the names of the tribes engraved on them, are too significant to be a mere unmeaning accessory. Again, for what purpose could those stones be intended? The text answers: "as a memorial before the Lord for ever" (ver. 29). But is not the purpose of the names on the two onyxes of the ephod perfectly the same (ver. 12)? And where is there, in the whole circle of the sacred utensils and robes, any other instance of such strange superfluity? It is therefore evident, that the stones were not merely gems with the names of the

heart when he goeth in before the Lord; and Aaron shall bear the decision of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.—31. And thou shalt make

children of Israel; they signified more; they were the Urim and Thummim.

6. If these were hidden in the breast-plate, unseen by all Israelites, was it not to be apprehended that the people might connect with them superstitious notions? What were those mysterious objects which had the power of manifesting the fates of Israel? And this danger must appear the greater, if we consider that the Urim and Thummim have questionable analogies among idolatrous nations. For, according to several ancient historians, the chief judge of the Egyptians wore, during his official duties, a golden chain round his neck, to which a golden figure, representing the goddess of Truth, was suspended, studded with precious stones of various colours. It can, therefore, scarcely be doubted, that the Urim and Thummim of Moses have some historical relation with that Egyptian custom; now, if they were mysteriously concealed from the people, what would have been more natural than that they represented to themselves in their imagination, similar figures to those which they had seen in Egypt, and that thus their notions, spontaneously bent to polytheistic aberrations, converted the holiest symbols into the absurdest superstition? But,

7. On the other hand, that Egyptian analogy derogates in no manner from the sanctity of the Urim and Thummim; there are several very decided differences. *a.* The Urim and Thummim were not consulted in the usual cases of jurisdiction; they were only resorted to in extraordinary emergencies which had immediate reference to the destinies of the Hebrew theocracy, and, therefore, they consisted of twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes. *b.* They were not regarded as possessing in themselves any divine power; they were mere emblems; they were worn only "as a memorial"; it is not from them that the inspira-

tion issues, but from Him who has chosen the children of Jacob as His peculiar nation. And if we consider the end of the Urim and Thummim, it will be obvious, that "as a memorial" means here, that Aaron shall remember that the interests of the whole of Israel are entrusted to his holiness and his enlightenment; not, as in ver. 12, where "for the children of Israel" is added, and where the names on the ephod are described as a memorial for the Israelites, that the High-priest prepares himself to expiate their sins, but that this is impossible without their personal co-operation by atonement and contrition. We are long accustomed to the practice of Moses to retain ancient usages, but to ennoble them by entirely divesting them of the impurities of the soil from which they are grown. The phylacteries also were derived from primeval customs, but their external form was filled with a new regenerating spirit.

8. But what is this new meaning, this internal spirit of the Urim and Thummim? This cannot be doubtful after the preceding remarks. As they are identical with the twelve gems, they must have some reference to their symbolical meaning; and this is, as we have observed, the purification and sanctification from the state of sin and worldliness. The brilliancy of the precious stone is a type of the shining splendour of the purified soul, and of the celestial orbs. Now the Urim and Thummim are nothing else than this "perfect light or brilliancy"; they represent the absolute banishment of terrestrial selfishness, the highest possible degree of self-denial. Therefore, Aaron had to wear them on the heart (vers. 29, 30), the source of all desires, of all mundane propensities; on the heart, which is "deceitful above everything and malignant, which no man knows, and which God alone searches" (Jer. xvii. 9, 10). If the heart of the High-priest was purified, if he pursued no other interests

the ROBE OF THE EPHOD all *of* blue. 32. And 'its opening for the head shall be in the midst thereof; it shall have

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—There shall be an hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof.

than the welfare of his people, then only was he worthy and capable of becoming the medium through which Israel received advice and guidance in times of trouble and uncertainty. And hence the much-disputed question, in what manner the answers of the Urim and Thummim were given, is easily to be decided. The High-priest was, by the sight of the gems, powerfully impressed with the grandeur of his mission; his mind gave itself up entirely to the duties of his office; all earthly thoughts vanished before him; he was raised to a prophetic vision, and in this state of enthusiastic sanctity God deigned to reveal to him His will and the fates of His people; and both the High-priest and the people were convinced of the truth of such inspirations. But there is this difference between the High-priest and the prophet, that the former has to try to rise up to God by moral exertion, whilst God descends to the latter spontaneously; the one is a servant, the other a messenger; and therefore the office of the High-priest is continuous, prophets are only inspired in extraordinary times and for special purposes.

We shall now briefly adduce the principal other explanations of the Urim and Thummim. Josephus writes: "God declared beforehand, by those twelve stones which the High-priest bore on his breast, and which were inserted into his breast-plate, when they should be victorious in battle; for so great a splendour shone forth from them before the army began to march, that all the people were sensible of God's being present for their assistance. Whence it came to pass, that those Greeks who had a veneration for our laws, because they could not possibly contradict this, called that breast-plate the *oracle*" (*Antiq.* III. viii. 9; compare VIII. iii. 8). It is evident from these words, that Josephus considers the Urim and Thummim identical with the twelve stones, which suggested, by miraculous

interference, the reply to the High-priest. The latter idea has been still further developed by the Rabbins, who assert, that, by means of the Urim, those letters which belonged to the answer shone in peculiar fulgency, either simultaneously or successively, whilst the Thummim taught the High-priest in which order they were to be read and composed into words; and since the names of the twelve tribes do not contain all the letters of the alphabet, it is asserted, with no degree of probability, that those of the patriarchs were added. But they maintain, that this extraordinary effect was produced on the stone by the Tetragrammaton, or two holy names of God, which were placed in the cavity of the breast-plate, and which filled the mind of the High-priest with enraptured enthusiasm. However, against this acception, it has been justly observed, that it attributes to the Tetragrammaton a magic power, than which nothing is more foreign to the spirit of Mosaism. Philo also identifies the two sides of the breast-plate with the Urim and Thummim.—Spencer asserts, that the Urim are a kind of figure or Teraphim, put into the Choshen, and that God or His angel revealed through it to the High-priest His will and the future events; whilst the Thummim were a mere symbol of the truthfulness of that revelation. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that this strange opinion is explicable from Spencer's bias to trace the Mosaic institutions to pagan prototypes, and, in this instance, to the accounts of Diodorus and Aelian concerning the figure of Truth which the Egyptian arch-judge wore, during his judicial functions, round his neck. It belongs to those remarkable idiosyncrasies, not uncommon even in great thinkers, that Hengstenberg, the unflinching champion of the Mosaic institutions, perfectly coincides with Spencer, as regards the borrowing of the Hebrew Urim and Thummim from those

¹a border of woven work round about its opening, like the opening of an armour, that it be not rent. 33. And thou shalt make upon the hem of the robe pomegranates of blue, and red, and crimson, upon its hem round about,

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—A braiding.

Egyptian models; and that he thinks to settle the question by the paradoxical remark: "The external resemblance shows the internal difference only in a more striking manner."—Michaelis, whom Jahn, Gesenius, and others, follow, believes that the Urim and Thummim were three very ancient stones, one for an affirmative, the other for a negative, and the third for a neutral reply; that they had long been used for lots, and that Moses ordered them to be preserved in the breast-plate. If this opinion is perfectly arbitrary, and sufficiently refuted by passages, as 1 Sam. xxiii. 9, and 2 Sam. ii. 1, it is moderate, if compared with that of Züllig, who maintains, that the Urim and Thummim are diamond dice, partly with the name of God engraved on them; that the Urim are polished, the Thummim unpolished gems; that the High-priest, when he wished to consult God, went into the Tabernacle, cast those dice on a table, observed their relative position, and pronounced the will of God according to a theory traditionally handed down from one High-priest to his successor. It is incredible to add, that a critic like Winer, who is generally distinguished by his sound, plain, common-sense views, calls this opinion ingenious, and ranks it among the most plausible explanations of the Urim and Thummim. But if such fantastic and visionary oddities, unsupported by the remotest allusion of the text, are suffered in Biblical criticism, we see no end of conjectures and whimsical combinations, and the study of the sacred records, ceasing to be a science, would only be another name for the production of the wildest and most uncouth subtleties.

31—35. VII. THE ROBE, which was to be of the weaver's work, is likewise called the "robe of the ephod" (ver. 32); for it

was worn immediately under it, and above the tunic; but it was longer than the former and shorter than the latter; so that no part of the sacred dress was entirely covered, with the only exception of the drawers, from reasons which will be obvious from our remarks on p. 400. The long girdle of the tunic was also partly visible under the robe. The latter had no sleeves, but was like the tunic entirely woven without the use of the needle; and was furnished at the upper side with an aperture for the head; but in order to prevent tearing the garment, which would have made it unavailable for the sacred service, the rim of the aperture was strengthened with a border like the hole of a linen armour, which served, therefore, not directly for an ornament. The robe was to be entirely of blue. That this is significant cannot be doubted, if we consider, that in Num. xv. 38, the Israelites are commanded to wear on the borders of their garments fringes with a thread of blue, "that they might see it and remember all the precepts of the Lord"; we may, therefore, safely infer that the robe, with its only blue colour represented the High-priest as perfectly and entirely under the command of God, as the instrument and guardian of His laws. If the tunic places him in the rank of priests, the robe is the peculiar pontifical garment; the former symbolizes, by its plain whiteness, only purity, absence of worldliness, or mere negative qualities; the latter points, by its blue colour, to heavenly virtue, to an active and positive striving after divine excellence. But that this garment might not be wanting in those other colours which are the specific marks of the holy service, it is ordered that on the hem "pomegranates of blue and red and crimson," should be affixed. The form of the pome-

and bells of gold between them round about: 34. A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about. 35. And it shall be upon Aaron to minister; and its sound shall be heard when he goeth into the holy *place* before the Lord, and

granates is not described in the text; it is therefore impossible to decide on this point; the ancient versions express them as the blossoms rather than the fruits, and in this they have at least several Biblical analogies in their favour. Their meaning is equally uncertain; it is known, that they were to the heathen nations a symbol of procreation and conception; but we need not add, that this notion is perfectly excluded in the Bible; whether they signify the love of God, or the word of God, or the Law, or good works, we must leave undecided. However, it is well-known how much the fruit of the pomegranate-tree was valued by the ancient nations. It is found in Palestine, Syria, Arabia, Egypt, India, and the southern countries of Europe. It reaches a height of about 8 or 10 feet; has a straight stem, with many boughs; a reddish rind, and lanceolate, pedunculated leaves; its foliage is bright and dark green; its large flowers, although inodorous, are remarkable for the beautiful crimson colour of the calyx and petals; and its fruit, which is reddish-coloured, of the size and shape of an orange, and ripens in August, is filled with numerous seeds, each surrounded with juicy and delicious pulp, which is eaten in various modes of preparation, and out of which an excellent sherbet is pressed. The tree was naturally much cultivated in gardens and orchards, but grows likewise wild. The Greeks applied several parts for medicinal purposes (as the bark of the root, the flowers, and the rind of the pericarp); and already Homer mentions the pomegranate, which by a rare combination of beauty and usefulness strongly recommended itself for artificial and ornamental imitation.—But between every two of these pomegranates (not *into* them) a golden bell was to be inserted

round the skirt (according to the Rabbin 72 in all; according to others 12, or 365), “and it shall be upon Aaron to minister; and its sound shall be heard when he goeth into the holy *place* before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not” (ver. 35). These words are too clear to be mistaken; the golden bells were to indicate to the people in the Court when the High-priest entered into the Sanctuary to perform, in their name, the prescribed service, and when he returned after having finished it. We have observed, that the pious devotion of the people was indispensable for rendering the intervention of the High-priest before God efficacious; the whole people was expected to give themselves up to prayer, contrition, and repentance, whilst the High-priest stepped into the immediate nearness of God to officiate in their name; as the High-priest was one, and represented both by his person and his vestments the unity of Israel, so the people was, during his sacred functions, likewise to form a unity; they atoned both for themselves individually, and for the nation, as inseparable members of the people of God—which notions have become familiar to us by the explanation of the paschal-lamb (see chap. xii.)—it was therefore most appropriate that they should all know the moment when he entered the holy abode, that they might collect and concentrate their thoughts upon the sublime task then devolving upon them, and that they should again be informed when he returned, that they might all conclude their religious reflections at the same time, and might thus appear as one undivided community. And nothing was more pertinent than that the High-priest himself made this double announcement by little bells, which pro-

when he cometh out, that he die not.—36. And thou shalt make a PLATE *of* pure gold, and thou shalt engrave upon it, *like* the engravings of a signet: HOLINESS TO THE LORD. 37. And thou shalt put it on a ribbon of blue, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. 38. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the sacred things which the children of Israel will consecrate, with all their sacred gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be acceptable before the Lord.—

bably were just above his knee, so that every step produced a sound calculated to rouse the attention of the people. We believe that we have done nothing more than unfolded what our text contains; several very ancient statements are in harmony with it (Sirach xlv. 11; Luke i. 10; Acts x. 4; Rev. viii. 3, 4); and we reject, therefore, the various conjectures proposed to explain the purport and end of the bells; that they typify the proclamation and expounding of the Law through Aaron, or the vigilance and attention in the execution of the Divine precepts; that they are made in imitation of the bells sometimes worn by Oriental monarchs, or similar vague suppositions.—The words, *that he die not*, do not strictly apply to the transgression of the last-named command, but to the whole cycle of precepts concerning the priestly garments; a similar use of the same phrase occurs in ver. 43; Lev. xvi. 13, etc.

36—38. VIII. THE MITRE and the PLATE have already been described in p. 401; and we observe here only with regard to ver. 38, that one of the functions of the High-priest was to purify from their sins those who made any offering in the holy Tabernacle; for as long as they are infected with iniquity, God does not accept their gifts; He does not delight in sacrifices and oblations, but in a pure heart; if the former are not the symbol of the latter, they are an abomination to Him; the reconciliation of man with

God ensues by internal reform and purification; as long as the latter has not taken place, his offerings and sacrifices are likewise considered unclean (not as the Rabbins believe, because the objects are in themselves unclean, as the productions of nature); but the High-priest wears on his mitre the golden plate with the majestic words: "Holiness to the Lord"; by means of this highest ornament he "bears the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts"; the Israelite in beholding and reflecting on the deep meaning of those words, becomes impressed with his sinfulness, thereby frees himself from it internally; thus his gifts become likewise pure and acceptable before the Lord. And because the plate of the mitre was intended to work such great and momentous effects, the High-priest was commanded perpetually to wear it on his forehead, that the means of grace and purification might ever be ready to the whole people. We believe that these are the highest possible religious conceptions; and it is obvious how far from the truth those are who see in our verse "narrow-minded and imperfect notions" of an uncivilized people, which endeavoured to obtain the favour of their God by presents, just as Oriental monarchs are propitiated by their subjects. The offerings are not brought for the sake of God, but for the sake of him who presents them; and as they must be preceded by internal regeneration, they

39. And thou shalt ¹weave the TUNIC of fine linen; and thou shalt make a MITRE of fine linen; and a GIRDLE shalt thou make of the work of the embroiderer.—40. And for Aaron's sons shalt thou make TUNICS, and thou shalt make for them GIRDLES, and TURBANS shalt thou make for them, for glory and for distinction. 41. And thou shalt clothe with them Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and thou shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may serve me as priests. 42. And thou shalt make them linen DRAWERS, to cover the flesh of their nakedness; from the loins to the thighs they shall reach: 43. And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come into the Tabernacle of Meeting, or when they approach the altar to minister in the holy *place*; that they bear not iniquity, and die: *it shall be* a statute for ever to him and his seed after him.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Embroider.

are an open confession, that the moral harmony of the mind is restored, that the heart's equipoise is regained.

40. About the garments of the common priests, see note on ver. 4.

41. The ceremonies connected with the inauguration of the priests are described and explained in the next chapter.

We have only to add, with regard to the sacred garments, that they seem to have been preserved in the holy treasury (Ezra ii. 69; Neh. vii. 70); or if we may draw an inference from a prophetic vision

and consider it based on historic fact, they were, after the conclusion of the ministrations, laid up in the holy chambers (Ezek. xliii. 14; xlv. 17—19); that even after they had become unavailable for the priests, they were appropriated for the service of the Sanctuary, as, for instance, for the wicks of the lamps burnt on the Feast of Tabernacles; and that the High-priest was consecrated in the official robes of his predecessor, which he wore during the seven days of his initiation (xxix. 29, 30).

CHAPTER XXIX.

SUMMARY.—The ceremonies to be performed at the consecration of Aaron and his sons are prescribed; they consist in washing, clothing, and anointing them with oil; a bullock is killed as a sin-offering, a ram as a burnt-offering, and another ram as a consecration-offering; a loaf, a cake, and a wafer, are prescribed as a wave-offering; the breast of the consecration-offering is waved, its leg heaved, and both parts are sanctified to belong, in all future times, to the priests (vers. 27, 28), whilst, in this instance, they were the portion of Moses, who acted as priest in the consecration-ceremonies (ver. 26). Aaron's successor shall be consecrated in his father's holy garments (vers. 29, 30). The flesh of the ram of consecration is to be eaten in the holy place by Aaron and his sons; and no stranger is to be admitted to it; if anything remains, it is to be burnt (vers. 33, 34). The

ceremonies of consecration are to be repeated during seven days (ver. 35). Then the sacrifices for the expiation of the altar (vers. 36, 37), and the daily sacrifices are prescribed (vers. 38—42); the latter were, one lamb in the morning, and one at dusk, each time accompanied by an oblation of flour, and a libation of wine. God promises to dwell among Israel, to meet them in the holy Tabernacle, and to shield them, as their God, always with the same power and love with which He has redeemed them from Egypt.

AND this is the thing which thou shalt do to them to hallow them to serve me as priests: Take one young bullock, and two rams without blemish, 2. And unleavened bread, and unleavened cakes ¹poured over with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil: of fine flour of wheat shalt thou make them. 3. And

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Tempered.

1. The construction of the Tabernacle has been ordered; Aaron and his sons have been appointed for its service; their official significant garments have been described, and every preparation is therefore made to enable them to enter upon their sacred functions. But the commencement of their activity was too important an event to be left without some imposing solemnity; it makes a decided epoch in the history of Israel; it is, in fact, the cornerstone of Israel's entire existence. For they were destined to be "a kingdom of priests;" the end of their national life was not worldly splendour, nor conquest and extension of territory; not military glory and accumulation of wealth; but sanctification, spirituality, and purity; in this point they were to be distinguished from all the other nations; their energies were to be directed to heaven, not to earth; to the purification and ennoblement of the heart, which is the only imperishable and truly beatifying boon, and not to the possessions of the earth, which are vanity and vexation of spirit. Religion is the kernel of Mosaism, and the first institutions, therefore, which it created were intended to secure for it a solid foundation, and before any other arrangement was made, either civil or political, the service of the Tabernacle was regulated in all its detail. Nor is the wisdom of the legislator herein less obvious than in all his other laws. The fear of God is the first

condition of all human virtues; hence the decalogue contains in its first five commandments, our duties towards God, and, in the latter five, those towards our fellow-men; the altar and the offerings were destined to restore the harmony between God and man, which had been disturbed by sin and transgression; they were the means by which the cravings of the weak heart were satisfied, by which man might approach the purity of his Divine prototype, and by which he might, at least temporarily, divest himself of selfishness and pride; thus, a reconciliation, not with God only, but also with man, was produced, and piety became the parent of all personal and social virtues. But it is obvious that the full import and significance of the ceremonies of consecration can only be understood in connection with the sacrifices in general; for they mirror forth the priestly duties in their relation to the various kinds of sacrifices. We must, therefore, reserve a complete exposition of these rites to the eighth chapter of Leviticus, where the actual inauguration of Aaron and his sons is related. In this place we content ourselves with such remarks as are indispensable for the immediate understanding of the text.

2. The *bread* is thick and hard, first sodden, and then baked in oil; the *cakes* are only baked, thick, and mingled with oil, perhaps perforated; and the *wafers*

thou shalt put them into one basket, and offer them in the basket, with the bullock and the two rams. 4. And Aaron and his sons thou shalt let approach to the door of the Tabernacle of ²Meeting, and thou shalt wash them with water. 5. And thou shalt take the garments, and clothe Aaron with the tunic, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breast-plate, and thou shalt gird him with the ³band of the ephod: 6. And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy diadem upon the mitre. 7. And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and shalt pour *it* upon his head, and anoint him. 8. And

² *Engl. Vers.*—The congregation.

³ Curious girdle.

are, like the cakes, baked, but thin, and afterwards poured over with oil. To eat such oiled cakes is still customary in many parts of the East. On the olive oil in general, see p. 370.

3. Moses consecrates Aaron and his sons; he performs, therefore, on this one occasion, the duties of a priest, and receives, accordingly, the usual emoluments appropriated for the latter (ver. 26).

4. The first ceremony was, that Aaron and his sons were washed, whether their hands and feet only, as was customary before every ministration, or whether other parts of the body likewise, as Jewish commentators believe, is uncertain. The washing symbolized the purification from sin, which constitutes the first negative element in the internal requirements of a priest.

7. The *diadem* is the *plate* of the mitre (p. 401); and the addition, “the diadem of holiness,” points still more clearly to the words: “Holiness to the Lord,” engraved on it. That the plate, and those words inscribed on it were, indeed, the characteristic and distinguishing mark of the High-priest, has been observed in p. 401.

8. The unction of the High-priest seems to have been different from that of the common priests, for whilst, with regard to the former, the verb *to pour*, is used, the term *to anoint*, is employed with reference to the latter; and

between both words the Rabbins have established this difference, that the former implies a complete and abundant pouring of oil; whilst the latter is merely a marking with the finger on the forehead. This distinction is not improbable, since the forehead is, as we have shown, that part of the head on which, usually, signs and badges were worn. The symbolical meaning of olive-oil has been a matter of much dispute. We observe here, but briefly, that it is partly, on account of its richness and fatness, an emblem of power and success; and partly, as is well known, a type of peace and reconciliation; in the former sense it is the symbol of royalty, in the latter that of priesthood; for the priest is the harbinger of the peace of the soul, and of reconciliation with God; and if the Tabernacle also, as we shall see, was anointed with oil, it is thereby very appropriately designated as an abode where man might regain the peace and harmony of his mind, and restore a complete union with his Creator. But as the kings possess their power as a gift of God, and stand, therefore, under His sovereignty, and are consecrated to Him; and as internal peace and reconciliation are the conditions of a holy life, such as is required in a priest, the oil is, at the same time, the emblem of sanctity; the kings are sacred to God as His worldly substitutes, the priests, as His spiritual representatives; the holy oil is the public sign

thou shalt let his sons approach, and thou shalt clothe them with tunics. 9. And thou shalt gird them with girdles, Aaron and his sons, and bind on them turbans. And the priest's office shall be theirs for an eternal statute, and *thus* thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons. 10. And thou shalt bring ¹the bullock before the Tabernacle of Meeting; and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the bullock. 11. And thou shalt kill the bullock before the Lord *at* the door of the Tabernacle of Meeting. 12. And thou shalt take of the blood of the bullock, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar with thy finger, and all the *other* blood beside the bottom of the altar. 13. And thou shalt take all the fat which covereth the inwards, and ²the lobe which is above the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat which *is* upon them, and burn *them* on the altar. 14. But the flesh of the bullock, and its skin, and its dung, thou shalt burn with fire without the camp: *it is* a sin-offering.—15. And thou shalt also take the one ram, and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram. 16. And thou shalt kill the ram, and thou shalt take its blood, and sprinkle *it* on the altar round about. 17. And thou shalt

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—A bullock.

² Caul.

of this delegation of power; those, therefore, who insult kings and priests, are considered as traitors against the Divine authority (2 Sam. i. 14).

9. *And thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons.* The Hebrew words signify literally: "And thou shalt fill the hand of Aaron and the hand of his sons." This phrase seems to have originated in a certain ancient ceremony connected with the appointment or consecration of officials; perhaps the signs and emblems of their functions were, with solemn rites, given into their hands; and in ver. 24, it is indeed related, that Moses, who acted here in the name of God, placed in the hands of Aaron and his sons, the fat, and certain parts of the ram of consecration, further, one loaf of bread, one cake, and

one oiled wafer. These objects must, therefore, be considered as representing the character of the priest's office; they were burnt to the Lord as a sweet odour, as an acceptable offering (ver. 25); they typified expiation and conciliation, and they thus expressed the chief tendency of the sacrifices.

10. This verse is the immediate continuation of ver. 3. The bullock was brought "before the Tabernacle of Meeting," that is, into the Court, where the altar of burnt-offering stood. Aaron and his sons put their hands upon the head of the animal as a symbol, that it takes upon itself their sins, or that, by sacrificing it, their sins might be pardoned them. In vers. 15 and 19, the same ceremony signifies, that the beasts are offered

cut the ram ³into its pieces, and wash its inwards, and its legs, and put *them* to its pieces, and to its head. 18. And thou shalt burn the whole ram *upon* the altar: it *is* a burnt-offering to the Lord; it *is* a sweet odour, an offering made by fire to the Lord. 19. And thou shalt take the second ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands upon the head of the ram. 20. And thou shalt kill the ram, and take of its blood, and put *it* upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about. 21. And thou shalt take of the blood which *is* upon the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle *it* upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him; and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and the garments of his sons with him. 22. And thou shalt take of the ram the fat and the ⁴fat tail, and the fat which covereth the inwards, and the lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat which *is* upon them, and the right ⁵leg; for it *is* a ram of consecration: 23. And one loaf of bread, and one cake of

³ *Engl. Vers.*—In pieces.

⁴ Rump.

⁵ Shoulder.

in their name, and are intended to represent certain results affecting them personally.

17, 18. The ram of the burnt-offering was to be cut "into its pieces," that is, probably, into its natural limbs; whilst the bullock was burnt entirely without being divided, because it was a sin-offering. The former was further burnt wholly on the altar; the latter, except some parts specified in ver. 13, without the camp.

20. A part of the blood of the ram of consecration was sprinkled upon the ears of Aaron and his sons, to remind them always to listen to the commands of God; upon their hands, to enjoin the duty of activity and zeal in the service of God; and upon their feet, to symbolize their walking in the ways of the Law.

21. The sons of Aaron were anointed like Aaron himself; the oil was the principal part of the substance which was sprinkled on them and on their garments; the blood was only added from the rams of the burnt-offering and of consecration, to show still more clearly that they were, by these ceremonies, appointed to God, and that they were holy to Him.

22. *And the fat tail.* It is known that the tail of a certain species of sheep (*Ovis laticaudata*), found in different parts of the East, contains a great quantity, often more than twenty pounds, of the finest fat, and that it is, therefore, put on a little cart tied behind the animal, partly to preserve the tail and the fat, partly to ease the sheep. It is thus accountable, that the tails of sheep, but not those of

oiled bread, and one wafer out of the basket of the unleavened bread, which *is* before the Lord: 24. And thou shalt put all in the hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his sons; and thou shalt wave them *for* a wave-offering before the Lord. 25. And thou shalt take them from their hands, and burn *them upon* the altar ¹besides the burnt-offering, for a sweet odour before the Lord, it *is* an offering made by fire to the Lord. 26. And thou shalt take the breast of the ram of Aaron's consecration, and thou shalt wave it *for* a wave-offering before the Lord: and it shall be thy part. (27. And thou shalt hallow the breast of the wave-offering, and the ²leg of the heave-offering, which has been waved and heaved of the ram of the consecration, *namely* of *that* which *is* for Aaron, and of *that* which *is* for his sons: 28. And it shall belong to Aaron and to his sons, by an eternal statute, from the children of Israel; for it *is* a heave-offering: and ³a heave-offering shall be *brought* from the children of Israel, of their peace-offerings, their heave-offering for the Lord).— 29. And the holy garments of Aaron shall be his sons' after him, to be anointed therein, and to be consecrated in them. 30. Seven days shall he of his sons who *will be* priest in his stead put them on, ⁴*he* who cometh into the Tabernacle of Meeting to minister in the holy place.— 31. And thou shalt take the ram of the consecration, and seethe its flesh in the holy place. 32. And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, and the bread which

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—For.

² Shoulder.

³ It shall be a heave-offering from the children of Israel.

⁴ When he.

bulls, are mentioned in the Mosaic sacrifices.

24. The waving consisted in turning the offering to all the four parts of the earth and to heaven, as a symbol, that it was destined for the Lord of heaven and earth; but the heaving was only a movement of the offering up and down (ver. 28).

27. This and the succeeding verse must be taken as a parenthetical digression:

the breast and the leg belonged, in this case, to Moses, who officiated as priest; but it was, in all future peace-offerings, the portion of Aaron and his sons.

31. The flesh of the ram of consecration was to be boiled "in the holy place," that is, in the Court of the Tabernacle, where it was also to be eaten (ver. 32), by priests only (ver. 33), in order to impart to this initiatory sacrifice a still higher sanctity.

is in the basket, *at* the door of the Tabernacle of Meeting. 33. And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate *and* to hallow them; but a stranger shall not eat *thereof*, for they *are* holy. 34. And if aught of the flesh of the consecration and of the bread remain to the morning, then thou shalt burn the remainder with fire; it shall not be eaten, for it *is* holy. 35. And thus shalt thou do to Aaron, and to his sons, according to all *things* which I have commanded thee; seven days shalt thou consecrate them. 36. And thou shalt offer every day a bullock *for* a sin-offering for atonement; and thou shalt ⁵expiate the altar, ⁶by making an atonement for it; and thou shalt anoint it, to hallow it. 37. Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and hallow it; and the altar shall be most holy; ⁷whosoever toucheth the altar ⁸must be holy.—38. Now this *is that* which thou shalt offer upon the altar: two lambs of the first year, every day continually. 39. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer ⁹at dusk. 40. And a tenth deal of fine flour, ¹⁰poured over with the fourth part of a hin of beaten oil, and the fourth part of a hin of wine *for* a libation *shall be* to the one lamb. 41. And the second lamb thou shalt offer at dusk, and thou shalt ¹¹offer thereto like the oblation of the morning, and like its libation, for a sweet odour, an offering made by fire to the Lord. 42. *This shall be* the continual burnt-offering throughout your generations, *at* the

⁵ *Engl. Vers.*—Cleanse.

⁶ When thou hast made an atonement for it.

⁷ Whatsoever.

⁸ Shall.

⁹ At even.

¹⁰ Mingled.

¹¹ Do.

34. See xii. 10.

35. The consecration of Aaron and his sons was to last for seven days; by this number, the ceremonies prescribed for it are characterized as holy and divine; and the rites assume a deeper meaning. Our text does not justify us in supposing, that only certain parts of those ceremonies were repeated during these seven days.

36, 37. The altar was, through the animals sacrificed thereon, the direct local

medium of conciliation and atonement; it was, therefore, necessary that it should itself be, and appear, clean; it was to be expiated in the same manner as the priests themselves, by sacrifice and anointment. That sacrifice was, naturally, a sin-offering.—*Whosoever toucheth the altar must be holy*; no unclean individual was allowed to approach it; it does not mean: whatever has once touched the altar must be considered holy.

door of the Tabernacle of Meeting, before the Lord, where I will meet you, to speak there to thee. 43. And there I will meet with the children of Israel, that it be hallowed by my glory. 44. And I will hallow the Tabernacle of Meeting, and the altar; and Aaron and his sons I will hallow to serve me as priests. 45. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. 46. And they shall know that I *am* the Lord their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I *am* the Lord their God.

38—42. *The daily sacrifices.* About the *omer* and *hin*, see note on xvi. 16, 36.

43—46. Only when the priests, their garments, and the altar, are duly purified and consecrated, God promises to meet Israel in the Tabernacle, to dwell among

them, to sanctify them by His glory, and so to assist and protect them, that they will know that He is the same God, who rescued them from the Egyptian thralldom, and selected them as His people.

CHAPTER XXX.

SUMMARY. The altar of incense, the ceremonies to be performed on it, and the kinds of incense exclusively to be used, are described (vers. 1—10, 24—38). A census of the people is ordered, on which occasion every Israelite above twenty years is to give half a shekel as ransom-money, to be applied for the purposes of the Tabernacle (vers. 11—16). Further, the brazen laver in the Court (vers. 17—21), and the preparation and ingredients of the holy anointing oil, are described (vers. 22—33).

AND thou shalt make an altar for burning incense; of acacia wood shalt thou make it. 2. A cubit *shall be* its length, and a cubit its breadth; square

1. The place which the precept concerning the altar of incense occupies, after the specification of the garments and the consecration of the priests, has been justified in the note on xxvi. 35. The altar of incense must, therefore, have a necessary internal connection with those ministrations, which point to the true and proper mission of the priests; and its very position illustrates its end and tendency. It stood in the Holy; on the one side it corresponded with the altar of burnt-offerings in the Court; and, on the other, with the ark and mercy-seat in the Holy of Holies (ver. 6); it was separated from either by a vail; and yet all these three implements stood in one straight

line, almost the middle of which formed the altar of incense. Further, the latter was, properly speaking, no *altar*; no sacrifices were allowed to be killed on it; it was evidently only called so on account of its *internal* resemblance with the altar of burnt-offerings; as, in fact, both were square and provided with horns; and burnt-offerings and incense were burnt daily. But, on the other hand, the latter was covered with brass; the former, with gold; and, in this respect, the altar of incense was superior to that of burnt-offerings. However, the mercy-seat was entirely of gold, whilst the frame-work of the altar of incense was of acacia wood; the former was

shall it be; and two cubits *shall be* its height; its horns *shall be* of the same. 3. And thou shalt overlay it *with* pure gold, its top, and its sides round about, and its horns; and thou shalt make to it a crown of gold round about. 4. And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under its crown, at its two corners upon its two sides shalt thou make *them*; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it with them. 5. And thou shalt make the staves of acacia wood, and overlay them *with* gold. 6. And thou shalt place it before the vail which *is* by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy-seat which *is* over the testimony, where I will meet with thee. 7. And Aaron shall burn thereon ¹incense of perfumes every morning, when he dresseth the lamps he shall burn it. 8. And when Aaron ²puts on the lamps ³at dusk, he shall burn it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations. 9. You shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt-sacrifice, nor oblation; nor shall you pour libation thereon.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Sweet incense.

² Lighteth or setteth up.

³ At even.

further distinguished by the Cherubim, those emblems of the Divine presence; and by the circumstance, that the High-priest only was permitted to approach it. The altar of incense is, therefore, inferior to the mercy-seat in holiness. But the resemblance between both lies in the fact, that they were equally destined to receive the blood of expiation of the sin-offerings; and that incense rose upon them; with that difference, that, on the mercy-seat, the blood of the sin-offering for the whole people of Israel was, once in the year, sprinkled on the Day of Atonement, but on the horns of the altar of incense, for the High-priest and the congregation, whenever they had occasion to bring a sin-offering (Lev. iv.). These comparisons will serve to explain the meaning of the altar of incense, and the relative signification of the three parts of the holy Tabernacle; but this subject will find its fuller and more comprehensive elucidation in the exposition of Leviticus. The description of the altar

of incense, see p. 370. It was also called "the inner altar," in opposition to the altar of the Court.

2. It was one cubit long and broad, but two cubits high; and formed, therefore, like the Tabernacle itself, a double cube. Its horns were, like those of the outer altar, out of one piece with it.

3. The top or upper surface, naturally required plating with metal, on account of the burning coals, which were placed on it from the altar of burnt-offerings.

6. It was placed "before the vail" of the Holy of Holies, that is, as the next words explain, "before the mercy-seat"; which was, as we have shown, in one line with it, though separated from it by the vail; it is very significant, that the position of the altar of incense is described with regard to the mercy-seat, with which it has an internal analogy (compare Heb. ix. 4; Rev. viii. 3).

9. Every incense which was not prepared in the manner prescribed in vers.

10. And Aaron shall make an atonement upon its horns once in a year, with the blood of the sin-offering of atonement; once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy to the Lord.

11. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 12. When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give *every* man a ransom for his soul to the Lord, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when *thou* numberest them. 13. This they shall give, every one who passeth to those who are numbered, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, of twenty gerahs the shekel; half a shekel *shall be* the offering for the Lord. 14. Every one who passeth to those who are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give the offering of the Lord. 15. The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, to give the offering of the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls. 16. And thou shalt

34—38, is called *strange* and unholy, and was, therefore, to be excluded from the altar, on which, besides, no other sacrifice or libation was to be offered.

10. On the Day of Atonement, the blood was, necessarily, sprinkled on the horns of this altar (Lev. xvi. 18—20); in the course of the year, it was only done, if a sin-offering was brought for the High-priest or for the congregation (Lev. iv. 7, 18).

11—16. God commands Moses, that when he numbers the people of Israel, every man shall give "a ransom for his soul to the Lord, that there be no plague among them." This is a remarkable precept, which has received more than one strange interpretation. That it has been dictated by the ancient superstition of the "evil eye," which is dangerous to a numbered multitude, and the calamitous effects of which the ransom was intended to avert, this idea can scarcely be attributed to Moses, as it is tantamount to the recognition of an

evil genius. But our text leaves us scarcely in doubt as to the true meaning of that command. In taking a census of the people every individual is personally distinguished as a member of the holy nation, of the kingdom of priests; in being enrolled among this favoured community, he ought to become conscious how little he possesses the qualities of a theocratical citizen; the census is, therefore, to every one individually, both an admonition to turn his mind to sanctity and fear of God, and an exhortation to repent and to atone for his transgressions; and therefore half a shekel was given as a sign of that craving after internal purity, such as behoves a covenantee of God; and that gift, which was applied for the holy service, was thus "a memorial before the Lord." But every numbering implies likewise an examination of the numbered on the part of God; and as the Israelites are only numbered in order to be included among the holy nation, it is to be feared that

take the atonement money from the children of Israel, and thou shalt give it for the service of the ¹Tent of Meeting, that it may be a memorial to the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.—17. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 18. Thou shalt also make a laver *of* brass, and its base *of* brass, for washing; and thou shalt place it between the Tent of Meeting and between the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. 19. And Aaron and his sons shall wash thereat their hands and their feet: 20. When they go into the Tent of Meeting, they shall wash *with* water, that they may not die; or when they approach to the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the Lord: 21. So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they may not die; and it shall be a statute for ever to them, *even* to him and to his seed throughout their generations.—22. Moreover, the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 23. Take thou also to thyself principal spices, *of* pure myrrh five hundred

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Tabernacle of the congregation.

many will be found unworthy of being admitted; that they will be destroyed; that “there will be a plague” in Israel; and as a symbol that they are earnestly willing to render themselves worthy of this high privilege, the half shekel is given as a ransom, which is, therefore, indeed “atonement-money.” An undeniable proof that this half-shekel is only a symbol, lies in the precept that the rich shall not give more, nor the poor less; all are equally sinful, equally unworthy of being God’s servants; all require atonement and expiation.—Thus the external necessity of providing the means for defraying the expences of the holy service, was made subservient to a sublime act of self-examination and correction; Mosaism leaves at every step marks of its high spirituality.—Less acceptable appears the reason, that by the census the vanity and pride of the individuals are nourished, and that the ransom is given in order to remind them that they owe their existence to God

alone.—On the value of the shekel, see note on xxi. 32. It is expressly added, that the ransom shall be “half a shekel of the *holy* shekel”; this contribution was employed for holiness, and was intended to produce holiness.

17—21. THE BRAZEN LAVER; see p. 372.—As washing the hands and feet typified purity of conduct, and sanctity of life, the priest who neglected these ablutions incurred the penalty of capital punishment; and this law is enjoined with an emphasis which renders it indisputable that it contains no mere ceremony, but an important moral precept.

22—33. The anointing oil is to consist of olive oil mixed with four ingredients, distinguished by their fragrance and costliness. As the incense also consisted of four component parts, it is obvious, that this number here alludes likewise, to perfection and wholeness. The circular form was everywhere excluded; the Tabernacle and all its implements, hangings, and curtains, had the

shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, two hundred and fifty *shekels*, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty *shekels*. 24. And of cassia five hundred *shekels*, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of olive-oil one hin: 25. And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compounded after the art of the spicer: and it shall be a holy anointing oil. 26. And thou shalt anoint the Tent of Meeting therewith, and the ark of the testimony;

square form; and we have seen that the same number prevails in the priestly vestments; it is therefore significant, and points, in this instance, to perfect, undivided, and undefiled holiness. The four ingredients are:

I. MYRRH, an aromatic plant, is used not only as a fumigator, but as a perfume for garments, beds, for embalming the dead, as an ointment, and also for medicines. It is not found in Palestine, except, perhaps, in gardens; but in Arabia, Ethiopia, and Abyssinia. It was very much esteemed by the ancient nations, especially the Orientals, and was known to them in several varieties (*Stacte*, *Gabirea*, *Troglodytica*, etc.). It was applied either as a gum for fumigating, or liquid, as the chief ingredient of a very costly ointment; it was even admixed to wine, to enhance its spicy taste; and an extremely strengthening power is attributed to such wine. The gum either exudes of its own accord (this is the "pure myrrh" of our text, identical with the "spontaneous myrrh" in Cant. v. 5, and is of superior quality), or from incisions made in the rind. The season when it is obtained most plentifully is in July and August. The description which the ancient writers have furnished of this tree or shrub do by no means agree; since Ehrenberg's accurate observations it has received the name *Balsamodendron Myrrha*; its bark is smooth, pale, greyish; the leaves and the stem are yellowish white; the former are oval, trifoliate, and stand on short, smooth peduncles, either singly or in clusters. The fruits are ovally pointed, and brown; the resin is at first oily and whitish, but

changes gradually into yellow, and assumes, in hardening, a reddish colour.

II. CINNAMON, an aromatic rind, imported by the Phœnicians, or, as others believe, by the Arabians, was much used for perfumes and ointments. The cinnamon-tree (*Laurus cinnamomum*, called *Korunda-gauhak* by the inhabitants of Ceylon) grows in East India, chiefly in Ceylon, but, at present, also on the Malabar coast, in the islands of Sumatra, in Borneo, China, and Cochin-China. But the best sort is found in Ceylon, on the southwestern coast, where the soil is light and sandy, and the atmosphere moist from the prevalent southern winds. The plants begin to yield cinnamon when about six or seven years old, after which the shoots may be cut every three or four years. The cinnamon-tree is only since the last century more accurately known, as strangers were not permitted access into the interior of Ceylon, where the cinnamon-groves occur. On the coast it is generally about twenty to thirty feet high, but reaches a much greater height in the groves; its stem is about three feet in circumference. The wood is inodorous, soft, and white, and is applied for very various uses. The boughs are very numerous; the leaves, originally almost scarlet red, become bright green, are oval, resembling the laurel, and four to six inches long; the blossoms are whitish, of agreeable smell, but not aromatic; in April they develop themselves into oval fruits, resembling those of the juniper-tree; they ripen in June, are neither in smell nor in taste similar to the cinnamon, but, if boiled, they secrete an oil, which becomes

27. And the table and all its vessels, and the candlestick and its vessels, and the altar of incense; 28. And the altar of burnt-offering with all its vessels, and the laver and its base. 29. And thou shalt hallow them, that they may be most holy; ¹whosoever toucheth them must be holy. 30. And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and hallow them to serve me as priests. 31. And thou

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy.

hard, white, and fragrant; it is frequently used for ointments, and applied to wounds; it is burnt in lamps, and, especially for the use of the king and the churches, prepared into candles, which, in burning, diffuse a most agreeable smell. The stem and the boughs of the cinnamon-tree are surrounded with a double rind; the exterior one is whitish or grey, and almost inodorous and tasteless; but the inner one, which consists, properly, of two closely-connected rinds, furnishes, if dried in the sun, that much-valued brown cinnamon, which is imported to us in the shape of thin fine barks, eight or ten of which, rolled one into the other, form sometimes one quill. This inner rind is, in our text, designated "spicy cinnamon." From the coarser pieces, an oil of cinnamon is obtained.

III. CALAMUS was, from early times, known to the ancients. Its root was very highly prized as a spice, especially of those species which grow in Arabia and India; those which occur in Europe were less esteemed. It is also said to have been found in a valley of Mount Lebanon. Ointments and fumigations were generally prepared from it. The plant has a reed-like stem, which is extremely fragrant, like the leaves, especially when bruised. It is of a tawny colour, much jointed, breaking into splinters, and having the hollow stem filled with pith like the web of a spider. It was much valued among the Hebrews (Cant. iv. 14; Isa. xliii. 24); and was from India imported to Palestine (Jer. vi. 20; xxvii. 19).

IV. CASSIA is extensively mentioned by ancient writers as an aromatic rind,

which was mixed as an ingredient with fragrant ointments. Cassia oil and cassia buds are likewise mentioned. The shrub is said to grow in India and Arabia; it is certainly not the *Laurus cassia* of Malabar; for this is only a wild species of the *Cinnamon Ceylonicum*. Nor is cassia merely distinguished from cinnamon "by the outer cellular covering of bark being scraped off the latter, but allowed to remain on the former. At present, cassia-bark is frequently sold instead of cinnamon; it has the same general appearance, smell, and taste; but its substance is thicker and coarser, its colour darker, its flavour much less sweet and fine than that of Ceylon cinnamon." It is imported from Bombay, Calcutta, Batavia, Singapore, etc.

The quantity of each of these spices to be mixed with the pure olive-oil was, of myrrh and cassia, five hundred shekels, and of cinnamon and calams, two hundred and fifty. That shekels are meant, not a smaller weight, is evident, from ver. 24, where it is expressly mentioned, with the addition, that it should be the *holy* shekel, which points again to the sacred use for which this ointment was intended (ver. 25). To prepare such unctions, a certain knowledge and skill was necessary; and a man who possessed this skill was a *seasoner*. — With this oil, the whole tent, and all its vessels and implements, were to be anointed; thereby the one was marked as a holy place, the others as holy instruments; they were devoted to sanctity; the Divine power rested upon them; the Spirit of God filled them.—The *stranger* who is here (ver. 33) forbidden to prepare, or to ap-

shalt speak to the children of Israel, saying, This shall be a holy anointing oil to me throughout your generations. 32. Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, nor shall you make *any other* like it after its proportion; it is holy; holy shall it be to you. 33. Whosoever compoundeth *any* like it, or whosoever putteth *any* of it upon a stranger, he shall be cut off from his people.—34. And the Lord said to Moses, Take to thyself spices, ¹storax, onycha, and galbanum; *these* sweet spices with pure frankincense; one part

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Stacte.

ply, ointments mixed of the same four substances just enumerated, is the Israelite who is not of the family of Aaron, like in xxix. 33; who acts contrary to this injunction is threatened with excision from the holy nation, that is, as he apparently does not respect the command and promise of God, who attributed to that ointment a purifying and sanctifying power, he forfeits his right of enjoying any longer the immediate sovereignty and guidance of the Holy One.

34. The SACRED INCENSE was mixed of the following four ingredients:

I. STORAX. It grows free in Syria, Palestine, Arabia, Asia Minor, Ethiopia, and the southern parts of Europe; the leaves are oval, villous at the nether side, pedunculate, 2 inches long, and 1½ inch broad; the tree attains a height of 12 to 20 feet, and produces a considerable number of thin boughs. The flowers are snow-white, sit in clusters at the extremity of the boughs, and spread a very agreeable odour; they bring forth small nuts, which contain two hard smooth kernels, of a strong taste. From the stem distils either spontaneously, or by incisions, a gum-like resin, which is transparent, pale-red or brownish, soft, and very fragrant, which was mixed with perfumes and ointments, and was also applied for medical purposes. The other translations, as balsam, liquid styrax, benzoin, costus, mastich, bdellium, are either indistinct or inaccurate.

II. ONYCHA is properly the crustaceous covering of the shells of certain species of shell-fish, which has some resemblance with

the human nail, and which has given the name to that substance (it is called by the Arabs "the claw of the devil"). It is found in the waters of India and Arabia, and is frequently used as an ingredient for incense; for although it is, in itself, by no means of fragrant smell, it enhances it if it is intermixed with other perfumes. The selection of such substance for the holy incense may have a symbolical meaning; it may signify that the sin or worthlessness of the individual does not destroy the love which God bears to Israel as a nation; that, on the contrary, His compassion and long-sufferance is strengthened if He sees the frailty and the weakness of human nature;—but we lay no stress upon an interpretation which is not based on a clear Biblical statement, and which is, in fact, superfluous, as it suffices to know, that the onycha indeed produces, in composition with the other parts, a greater fragrance.

III. GALBANUM is the resin of the jointed, thorny, umbelliferous shrub stagnitis, which grows in Abyssinia, Arabia, Syria, and Kurdistan; it is obtained by incisions in the rind; it is fat, glutinous, of the consistence of wax, brownish or brownish-yellow, with white spots in the interior, which are the agglutinated tears, of a strong, but disagreeable, warm and bitter odour, by which serpents and reptiles were expelled, and the bees forced from their hives. The most known variety is the Galbanum Persicum, which is said to come from Peru. Like onycha,

shall be like the other. 35. And thou shalt make it an incense, an ointment of the work of the ointment maker, ²with salt, pure and holy. 36. And thou shalt beat *some* of it to powder, and put of it before the testimony in the Tent of Meeting, where I shall meet with thee; it shall be most holy to you. 37. And *as for* the incense which thou shalt make, you shall not make to yourselves according to its proportion; it shall be to thee holy for the Lord. 38. Whosoever shall make like it, to smell thereto, shall be cut off from his people.

² *Engl. Vers.*—Tempered together.

it is, when burnt separately, of no agreeable odour, but if added to other ingredients of incense, it both strengthens the smell, and retains it longer. In medicine it was used as a stimulant and for antispasmodic drugs, as it is still employed for external application to reduce indolent tumours. Galbanum is at present imported from Bombay, whither it is first brought probably from the Persian Gulf.

IV. FRANKINCENSE was, as is well known, extensively used for fumigations and sacrifices, not only by the Romans, but by most of the ancient nations. It was imported to Palestine from Arabia Felix, especially from Sheba, which was considered as its native soil, although it occurs occasionally also in Palestine and Asia Minor, but scarcely in Persia or Syria. Modern travellers assert that Arabia produces only an inferior species of frankincense, that the best sorts occur in Hadhramaut,

and that it is likewise found in India. The ancient naturalists differ considerably in the description of this plant, as they did not know it from personal examination. It is represented as a shrub, growing on mountains, and thorny; it reaches a height of about five feet; its leaves and fruits are much like those of the myrtle. According to Pliny (xii. 32) the frankincense is obtained by incisions twice in the year; the first time in the beginning of autumn; this sort is white and pure; and the second time in the winter, when it is of a reddish colour, and in quality much inferior to the former kind.

37, 38. It is evident that the preparation of incense for *private* or *profane* use ("to smell thereto") was forbidden, but not its renewal for the holy sacrifice. The traditional opinions on this subject are excluded by the text.

CHAPTER XXXI.

SUMMARY. God appoints Bezaleel for the execution of the holy Tabernacle, its vessels, and the priestly garments; gives him Aholiab as an assistant, and fills, besides, many others with wisdom and skill for the sacred work. He repeats the law concerning the sanctification of the Sabbath, and delivers to Moses the two Tables of the Law.

AND the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2. See, I have called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: 3. And I have filled him with the spirit of God, with wisdom, and

with understanding, and with knowledge, and with all manner of workmanship, 4. To devise skilful designs, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, 5. And in cutting of stones, to set *them*, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. 6. And I, behold, have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, and in the hearts of all who are wise-hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that which I have commanded thee: 7. The Tent of Meeting, and the ark for the testimony, and the mercy-seat which *is* upon it, and all the vessels of the Tabernacle, 8. And the table and its vessels, and the pure candlestick with all its vessels, and the altar of incense, 9. And the altar of burnt-offering with all its vessels, and the laver and its base, 10. And the ¹garments of office; namely the holy garments of Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister, 11. And the anointing oil, and the incense of perfumes for the holy *place*, according to all which I have commanded thee, shall they do.—12. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 13. Speak thou also to the children of Israel, saying, Indeed, my Sabbaths you shall keep; for it *is* a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that you may know that I *am* the Lord who sanctifieth you. 14. Therefore you shall keep the Sabbath; for it *is* holy to you; he who defileth it shall surely be put to death; for whosoever doeth any work thereon, that soul shall be cut off from among its people. 15. Six days may work be done; and on the seventh *is* a ²great rest-day, holy to the Lord; whosoever doeth *any* work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. 16. Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, *for* an eternal covenant. 17. It is a sign between me and between

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—The cloths of service.

² Sabbath of rest.

13—17. The law about Sabbath is here emphatically repeated (ver. 13), to remind the Israelites, that the holy service in the Tabernacle cannot supersede the observance of the Sabbath, but

that it receives its true value only by the latter, which is the source of spiritual life, and the means of deliverance from materialism. We have treated of this momentous passage in the notes on xx. 8—11.

the children of Israel for ever; for *in* six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.—18. And He gave to Moses, when He had finished to speak to him on Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

18. That important documents were, in ancient times, and still are, among Eastern nations, engraved on stone, is a fact too universally known to require any

further illustration (compare Job xix. 24). —The *finger of God* is identical with the *power* of God, like in viii. 15; Psa. viii. 4.

CHAPTERS XXXII. TO XXXIV.

SUMMARY. When the people despaired of Moses' return, after an absence of forty days, they urged Aaron to make a golden calf, as an image of their God who had brought them from Egypt. They gave their gold trinkets and ornaments; the calf was made, an altar erected, and a feast was celebrated with dancing and immoderate joy (vers. 1—6). When God saw this He was indignant at the degeneracy of the ungrateful people; He intended to destroy them, and to create a great nation out of the descendants of Moses. But the latter implored God's mercy, reminded Him of His covenant concluded with the patriarchs, and of the promises solemnly guaranteed to them; and God revoked His decree concerning the extirpation of His people (ver. 7—14). Moses descends, hears the revelry of the multitude; in his anger he breaks the Tables of the Law, which God had given him; melts the calf, and reduces it to atoms, which he throws into the water, and causes the people to drink (ver. 15—20). He censures Aaron severely, who could only offer a very feeble excuse for his blamable weakness (ver. 21—24). Then he invites those who are for the Lord to rally round him; the Levites respond to his call, and on his command kill three thousand of the sinners (ver. 25—29). Moses ascends to God, and prays that if He cannot forgive this faithlessness of the Israelites, He may destroy him in their stead; but God declares distinctly that He will only punish the actual sinners—and He sent a plague among the people (ver. 30—35). God further assures Moses, that He will deliver Canaan and its tribes into the hands of the Hebrews, but that He will effect this through a messenger, not by personal guidance, on account of the rebelliousness of the people—which announcement spreads consternation and grief in the camp; and the Israelites divest themselves of their golden ornaments (xxxiii. 1—6). Moses removes his tent without the camp; God communes with him there, which the people witness with reverence (ver. 7—11). Moses wishes to see the whole glory of God, who, however, reminds him that this is impossible to a human being, but promises to reveal to him all His attributes of mercy, and their influence upon the affairs of man (ver. 12—23). Accordingly, God commanded him to make two other tables of stone, and to ascend the mountain; God appeared to him in a cloud, and proclaimed His goodness and His justice (xxxiv. 1—8). Moses here repeats his entreaty, that God might Himself accompany the people; He promises it, renews the Covenant under the condition that they shall keep aloof from other gods, and observe the commandments and laws previously revealed (ver. 9—26). Moses stays with God forty days and forty nights, during which time he writes down those fundamental conditions. Then he returns to the people with the Tables of the Law; his face was radiant with the divine glory: therefore, whenever he did not commune with God, or speak to the people, he covered his face with a veil (ver. 27—35).

AND when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mount, the people assembled to Aaron, and said to him, Rise, make us ¹a god who shall go before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what hath become of him. 2. And Aaron said to them, Take off the golden rings which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* to me. 3. And all the people took off the golden rings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* to Aaron. 4. And he received *it* from their hands, and formed it with a graving-tool, and made it a molten calf; and they said, These *are* thy gods, O Israel, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt. 5. And when Aaron saw *it*, he built an altar before it; and Aaron proclaimed, and said, To-morrow *is* a feast to the Lord. 6. And they rose up early on the following day, and offered burnt-offerings, and brought peace-offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose to play.—7. And the Lord said to Moses, Go, descend, for thy people which thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt is depraved. 8. They have swerved quickly from the way which I have commanded them; they have made for themselves a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereto, and said, These *are* thy gods, O Israel, who have

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Gods.

1—6. The prolonged absence of Moses was the only cause of the aberration of the golden calf, which they, in fact, did not intend as an idol, but as an image of the true God; they did not transgress the first, but the second commandment (see p. 258). The sin of the golden calf is rigorously reprehended in Ps. cvi. 19—23. According to tradition, it took place on the seventeenth day of Tammuz, a day which later became also more than once a day of national grief.—The ear-rings were an ornament worn by both men and women, they could therefore be collected in sufficient quantity; and this statement of the

sacred text contains by no means “fabulous elements” (see p. 373). The opinion that Aaron asked just to bring the ear-rings, because he hoped that the people would not easily part with them, since they seem to have been esteemed as amulets (Gen. xxxv. 4), is not supported by any allusion of the text (see ver. 24). Aaron’s unmanly compliance was indeed blamable, and is thus represented, not only in ver. 25, but with still stronger terms in Deut. ix. 20; although he tried to remind the people, at least, of God’s supremacy, by appointing a festival in honour of Him (ver. 5).—The calf which Aaron made was in imitation of the

brought thee out of the land of Egypt. 9. And the Lord said to Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people. 10. Now, therefore, let me act, that my anger be kindled against them, and that I may annihilate them, and I will make of thee a great nation. 11. And Moses invoked the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why is Thy anger kindled against Thy people, which Thou hast brought from the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? 12. Wherefore should the Egyptians speak and say, To *their* misfortune He brought them out to slay them in the mountains, and to annihilate them from the face of the earth? Turn from the rage of Thy anger, and recall the evil against Thy people. 13. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Thy servants, to whom Thou hast sworn by Thy own self, and to whom Thou hast said, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land of which I have spoken will I give to your seed, and they shall inherit *it* for ever. 14. And the Lord recalled the evil which He thought to do to His people.—15. And Moses turned and descended from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony *were* in his hand; the tables *were* written on both their sides, on the one side and on the other *were* they written. 16. And the tables *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God, graven upon the tables. 17. And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted,

Egyptian Apis (Osiris in Memphis) or Mnevis (the sun in Heliopolis), but scarcely of Typhon, the evil genius. Religious festivals, and especially those of the heathens, were celebrated with dances and public meals (see Judg. xxi. 21; 1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7; 2 Sam. vi. 5; 1 Kings xviii. 26).

7—14. *Stiff-necked*, obstinate, here persisting in the Egyptian abominations in spite of God's great miracles. God foresaw that Moses would pray for the people (ver. 10); He tried him, therefore, whether he would prefer his personal glory to that of the people; but Moses implores God to fulfil His former promises,

and to save Israel, from the three reasons stated in the twelfth and thirteenth verses.

15—20. Joshua, as the faithful and constant minister of Moses (xxxiii. 11), had accompanied him, and stayed at some lower part of the mountain, where he awaited his return (see note on xxiv. 1).—Moses, in his indignation, takes the calf, melts it in fire, to destroy first its shape; then grinds, or beats, or files the gold into small pieces, or dust, and throws the latter into the water of the river which comes from the Horeb (Deut. ix. 21). This is the only possible explanation which the literal sense of the text admits; the words do not compel us to suppose the pieces to have

he said to Moses, *there is* a noise of war in the camp. 18. And he said, *It is* not the voice of *those who* cry victory, nor the voice of *those who* cry defeat; the voice of *those who* sing do I hear. 19. And it happened when he approached the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing, and the anger of Moses was kindled, and he cast the tables out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. 20. And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt *it* in fire, and ground *it* to powder, and scattered *it* on the surface of the water, and made the children of Israel drink of *it*. 21. And Moses said to Aaron, what hath this people done to thee, that thou hast brought *so* great a sin upon it? 22. And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my Lord be kindled; thou knowest the people, that it *is inclined* to evil. 23. And they said to me, make us¹ a god, who shall go before us, for *as for* this Moses, the man who hath brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what hath become of him. 24. And I said to them, Whosoever hath gold, let him take *it* off; so they gave *it* me, and I cast it into the fire; and so this calf was produced. 25. And when Moses saw that the people ²*was* unbridled; for Aaron had made it unbridled to an ignominy for their adversaries: 26. Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, He who *is*

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Gods.

² Were naked.

been exactly so fine as powder; and as the act of drinking the water was a symbolical one, it would be pedantic to urge that the atoms which are thus produced are not small enough to amalgamate with the water. It is, therefore, neither necessary to recur with Rosenmüller to the conjecture, that the calf was, by a certain chemical process, known already to the ancient Egyptians, reduced to powder or *calcined*, nor to suppose here with Winer, "the incorrect view, or at least the incorrect expressions of a writer not versed in the matter." Moses threw the atoms into the water, as an emblem of the perfect annihilation of the

calf, and he gave the Israelites that water to drink, not only to impress upon them the abomination and despicable character of the image which they had made, but as a symbol of purification, to remove the object of the transgression by those very persons who had committed it (compare Num. xix.).

21—24. Aaron's reply to the reproachful question of Moses is designedly obscure and 'confused, because he was himself conscious of the great crime which his fatal want of moral courage had abetted.

25—29. Moses felt deeply the ignominy which Israel's revolt must necessarily call upon them in the eyes of their

for the Lord, *may come* to me; and all the sons of Levi assembled to him. 27. And he said to them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword at his side, pass on, and return from gate to gate in the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his friend, and every man his neighbour. 28. And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses, and there fell of the people on that day about three thousand men. 29. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves to-day to the Lord, yea, every man with his son, and with his brother, and bring upon yourselves a blessing to-day. 30. And it came to pass on the following morning, that Moses said to the people, You have sinned a great sin, and now I will ascend to the Lord, perhaps I shall make an atonement for your sin. 31. And Moses returned to the Lord, and said, Oh, this people hath sinned a great sin, and they have made to themselves a god of gold. 32. And now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; but if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written. 33. And the Lord said to Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. 34. Therefore now go, lead the people to *the place* of which I have spoken to thee: behold, my ¹messenger shall go before thee: and in the day when I visit I shall visit their sin

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Angel.

enemies; and in order openly to show how much he abhorred their perverse conduct, he summoned the members of his tribe to kill the criminals with the sword, and not even to spare their nearest relatives from ill-placed compassion (see p. 258; and notes on xiii. 2, and xxii. 19). The Levites obeyed; and this first act of their ready zeal in the service of the Lord, was their initiation in their holy mission, and the source of all their future blessings (ver. 29).

30—35. *If thou wilt forgive their sin*—it will be an act of unmerited mercy; this is an ellipsis on an aposiopesis, not unusual in the Oriental style; compare

Gen. iv. 8, especially 1 Sam. xii. 14.—*Blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written*; that is, take me from among the living; for in the public registers the names of all citizens are entered, but are erased when the individuals die; and this idea is here transferred to God, who is the ruler of mankind; compare Psalms lxix. 29; Isaiah. iv. 3.—About the *messenger*, see note on xxiii. 21.—*In the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them*, that is I shall not leave them unpunished; and the plague which ensued must be considered as a chastisement for their sin, which was thereby expiated. These words cannot mean:

upon them. 35. And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf which Aaron had made.

whenever they, *or their descendants*, will sin, I shall always punish them in some degree for that transgression also; for this

would be in opposition with the promise of God, that He will only punish those who have sinned (ver. 33).

CHAPTER XXXIII.

AND the Lord said to Moses, Go, journey up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land which I have sworn to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, To thy seed will I give it. 2. And I will send ¹a messenger before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: 3. To a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff-necked people, lest I consume thee on the way. 4. And when the people heard these evil words, they mourned, and no man put on his ornaments. 5. ²And the Lord said to Moses, Say to the children of Israel, you *are* a stiff-necked people; ³if I go up in the midst of thee *but* one moment, I should destroy thee; therefore now lay off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what I shall do to thee. 6. And the children of Israel divested themselves of their ornaments ⁴*returning* from the Mount Horeb. 7. And Moses took the ⁵tent and pitched *it* for

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—An angel.

² For the Lord had said.

³ I will come up in the

midst of thee in a moment.

⁴ By the Mount Horeb.

⁵ Tabernacle.

1—6. God renews His assurance that He would lead Israel, through a messenger, into the Holy Land, and expel the Canaanites (xxiii. 20—23). But He urges here, more distinctly than He had done before, that He would not lead them Himself, because they had now too openly manifested their disobedience and obstinacy, a re-iteration of which would, if God were personally present among them, cause their ruin and extirpation. The people felt at last contrition, put off their ornaments, and repented in mourn-

ing their unpardonable levity (ver. 4). God saw their self-humiliation, exhorted them to persevere in it, and promised them merciful consideration (ver. 5).

7—11. The Israelites had revolted against God; they were unworthy of His presence; Moses alone had remained faithful, and as the Lord wished to continue His communions with the latter, He ordered him to place his tent without the camp; here He appeared to Moses, and it could, therefore, justly be called a "Tent of Meeting" (ver. 7; compare

himself without the camp, and called it ⁶the Tent of Meeting. And it came to pass, *that* every one who sought the Lord went out to the Tent of Meeting, which *was* without the camp. 8. And it came to pass, when Moses went to the tent, *that* all the people rose, and stood every man *at* the door of his tent, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tent. 9. And it came to pass when Moses entered into the tent, *that* the pillar of cloud descended, and stood *at* the door of the tent; and *the Lord* spoke with Moses. 10. And all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing *at* the door of the tent; and all the people rose, and bowed down, every man *at* the door of his tent. 11. And the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend. And he returned to the camp; but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, the minister, did not depart out of the tent. 12. And Moses said to the Lord, See, Thou sayest to me, Lead this people; and Thou hast not let me know, whom Thou wilt send with me; yet Thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. 13. Now, therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy eyes, show me, I pray, Thy way, that I may know Thee; that I may find grace in Thy eyes: and see that this nation *is* Thy people. 14. And He said, My presence shall go *with thee*, and I will lead thee to rest. 15. And he said to him, If

⁶ *Engl. Vers.*—Tabernacle of the congregation.

xviii. 7). The glory of God, which accompanied these communications, contributed to enhance the authority of Moses, whom the people now regarded not only with respect, but with reverence. It was only after a perfect conciliation between God and Israel, that the latter were allowed to encamp round the Sanctuary (Numb. ii). It is therefore obvious, that this "Tent of Meeting" is neither the Tabernacle, the erection of which is only described in the last chapter of this book, nor, as some ancient commentators proposed, a certain portable sacred tent which the Israelites possessed as an inheritance from the time of the patriarchs.

—God spoke to Moses *face to face*, that is, according to Numb. xii. 8, not in obscure visions, not in enigmatical allusions, but in distinct words and expressions, "as a man speaketh to his friend." However, it is more than once repeated, that although Moses heard a voice, he saw no manner of similitude (Deut. iv. 15, etc.); so careful is the sacred word in avoiding terms which might lead to erroneous conceptions on the nature of the Deity.

12—23. Moses despairs of the possibility of leading alone the obstinate and vacillating people into the promised land, although God had assured him: "I know thee by name," that is, I have selected

Thy presence does not go *with me*, let us not go from here. 16. And how shall it in fact be known that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy eyes? *is it* not by Thy going with us? 'and if we are distinguished, I and Thy people, from all the nations which *are* on the face of the earth? 17. And the Lord said to Moses, I shall do the thing *of* which thou hast spoken; for thou hast found grace in my eyes, and I know thee by name. 18. And he said, I pray Thee, show me Thy glory. 19. And He said, I shall make all my goodness pass before thee, and I shall proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and shall be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and shall show mercy on whom I will show mercy. 20. And He said, Thou canst not see my face; for no man can see me and live. 21. And the Lord said, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon the rock. 22. And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by. 23. And then I will take away

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—So shall we be separated.

thee among all thy people, and appointed thee as their leader (ver. 12). He explores God's immediate and personal assistance; he desires to know "His ways, that he might know Him," that is, he wishes to be informed of all His attributes, that he might better be enabled to act according to His will and delight (ver. 13.) Without the protection of God, Moses resigns every further advance in their journeys; for it is by His Divine nearness alone that Israel is distinguished from all the nations of the earth (compare xix. 5, 6). God grants him this request so fervently urged (ver. 17); Moses, encouraged by this concession, renews, with greater force, his former wish to be acquainted with the "glory" of God, or with His eternal qualities (ver. 18); God yields to this request likewise, and promises to reveal to him all His "goodness," or all His attributes of love and mercy; from which he will be able to infer who deserves for-

giveness and compassion (ver. 19; see xxxiv. 5, 6). "I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee," implies that God will teach him those attributes in so unmistakeable a manner that he will know that the revelation proceeds from Him. However, although Moses might be able to understand the nature of God, with his intellect, no living man can behold Him with his external senses (ver. 20). If the contents of this whole section are obscure, this mysteriousness attains its highest climax in the three last verses (21—23). The text describes one of those familiar communions between God and Moses; the latter desires to know what no human being can fathom, what no human language can express; in speaking of the sublimest metaphysical truths it would be requisite to employ a purely metaphysical medium of expression; when they are discussed in the ordinary language of man, their aerial essence assumes unavoidably a gross gar-

my hand, and thou shalt see my back; but my face cannot be seen.

ment; and it is obligatory on the reflective mind of the reader to divest them again of this matter, and to conceive them in their pure abstraction. We observe here, therefore, only, that the Divine appearance was behind covered by a cloud, and that Moses was therefore allowed to see it; but the shining glory of His face he was

not permitted to behold. The last verse may, indeed, contain that profound idea which ancient interpreters deduced from it, that man may see the *works* of God or the *consequences* of His activity, but that he cannot penetrate into their internal principles, their motives and their ends.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AND the Lord said to Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like the first: and I will write upon *these* tables the words which were on the first tables, which thou hast broken. 2. And be ready in the morning, and ascend in the morning to mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me on the top of the mount. 3. And no man shall ascend with thee, nor let any man be seen throughout all the mount; nor let the flocks and herds feed before that mount. 4. And he hewed two tables of stone like the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and ascended to mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. 5. And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. 6. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Eternal, the Eternal, a God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; 7. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means always leave unpunished; visit-

1—8. The covenant between Israel shall be renewed; the basis of this covenant are the Ten Commandments; Moses is, therefore, ordered to make two other tables of stone (whilst the first had been made by God Himself); and to appear alone, without being accompanied by any one, on the *top* of Mount Sinai. Thus this second revelation took place in still more solemn solitude than the former one (com-

pare xxiv. 9; xix. 17). Moses executed these commands; according to tradition, he ascended the mountain on the first day of Ellul, and returned on the tenth of Tishri, the Day of Atonement, on which he proclaimed the perfect pardon which God had granted to His people. The Lord fulfilled the promise made to Moses in xxxiii. 19; He proclaimed His name (ver. 5); passed by before Moses, and

ing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, to the third and to the fourth *generation*. 8. And Moses hastened, and bowed to the earth, and prostrated himself.—9. And he said, If now I have found grace in Thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray Thee, go among us; ¹although it is a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Thy inheritance. 10. And He said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou *art* shall see the work of the Lord: for it is a terrible thing which I will do with thee. 11. Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. 12. Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: 13. But you shall destroy their altars, break their images, and ²annihilate their Astartes. 14. For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, ³Zealous is His name, He is a Zealous God: 15. Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land; *for* when they go astray after their gods, and sacrifice to their gods, they might invite

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—For.

² Cut down their groves.

³ Whose name is Jealous, etc.

pronounced His attributes of kindness and mercy. These momentous and sublime epithets might be made the basis of a complete theology of the Old Testament; they deserve, indeed, a systematic treatment, which must, however, be reserved to another more appropriate place.—“The Eternal is the Eternal,” forms the corner-stone of the Divine attributes; He is unchangeable; His mercy once promised, will for ever be manifest and abundant; the sin of the golden calf has not altered His former decree to love and to guide Israel as His own people. On the contents of ver. 7.

see our explanation of the second commandment (compare Num. xiv. 18; see p. 463). The Rabbins count thirteen attributes; and they have most suitably appointed them as a kind of refrain for all prayers of repentance and atonement.

9—26. Moses is overwhelmed by the power of these majestic titles (ver. 8); but as they all breathe love and compassion, he is induced to repeat his entreaty that God might go with Israel, and receive them as His people, *although* it is a refractory nation (ver. 9).—God renews at last unreservedly the former alliance with Israel, under precisely the same

thee, and thou wouldst eat of their sacrifice; 16. And thou wouldst take of their daughters to thy sons, and when their daughters go astray after their gods, they would make thy sons go astray after their gods. 17. Thou shalt make to thyself no molten gods. 18. The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month Abib: for in the month Abib thou camest out of Egypt. 19. All that openeth the womb *is* mine; and all thy cattle *which* is born as male, the firstling of ox or of sheep. 20. But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou dost not redeem *it*, then shalt thou break its neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem. And none shall appear before me empty. 21. Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in the time of ploughing and of reaping thou shalt rest. 22. And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering *at* the year's circuit. 23. Thrice in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel. 24. For I shall expel the nations before thee, and enlarge thy boundaries: nor shall any man desire thy land, when thou goest up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year. 25. Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; nor shall the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover be left to the morn-

conditions as those specified in chapters xx—xxiii. He promises to do unparalleled miracles for Israel (ver. 10), and to expel the nations of Canaan (ver. 11), but the Israelites are commanded to abstain from every association with them (vers. 12, 15; compare xxiii. 32, 33); for since God and Israel have concluded, as it were, a matrimonial alliance (see p. 248), the adoration of heathen gods is faithlessness and treachery, and a breach of the sacred covenant: to destroy their altars, to break their images, and to annihilate their Astartes (ver. 13; compare xxiii. 24; Astarte or Venus was worshipped by

the Phœnicians and Aramæans; the signification, "groves," is perfectly unsupported; to adore no other deity except God, who is zealous and severe (ver. 14; compare xx. 5); to make no molten gods (ver. 17; compare xx. 20); to observe the Passover (ver. 18; compare xxiii. 15); to sanctify to God every firstborn of man and beast (vers. 19, 20; compare xxxiii. 2, 13); to keep the Sabbath even in the time of ploughing and reaping (ver. 21; compare xxiii. 12); to celebrate Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles (vers. 22, 23; compare xxiii. 14, 16, 17), for God will during their pilgrimages to

ing. 26. The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring to the house of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk.—27. And the Lord said to Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words ¹I make a covenant with thee and with Israel. 28. And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread nor drink water. And He wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.—29. And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses knew not that the skin of his face shone; ²since He had spoken to him. 30. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold the skin of his face shone: and they were afraid to approach him. 31. And Moses called them; and all the chiefs of the congregation returned to him: and Moses spoke with them. 32. And afterwards all the children of Israel approached: and he commanded them all that which the Lord had spoken with him in mount Sinai. 33. And ³when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. 34. But when Moses went before the Lord to speak with Him, he took the veil off, until He came out. And he came out, and spoke to the children of

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—I have made.

² While he talked with him.

³ Till Moses had done speaking with them, etc.

the temple shield the land and keep off the enemies (ver. 24); to remove all leaven previous to the sacrificing of the paschal-lamb, not to leave anything of it, or of its fat, to the following morning (ver. 25; compare xiii. 18; xii. 10); to offer to God all firstling-fruits, and not to seethe the kid in the milk of its mother (ver. 26; compare xxiii. 19).—It is necessary to remark, that all the laws here enjoined concern exclusively the relation between man and God, not between man and his fellow-man; for this was a renewal of the covenant which had been broken, not by any neglect of human, but of divine duties.

27—35. Moses wrote down all these

commands, whilst God Himself engraved the decalogue on the tables (compare ver. 1; Deut. x. 4). After forty days he descended; and his face shone from the reflex of the Divine glory, which had communed with him (ver. 29). The Vulgate translates *cornuata facies*; and hence it came, that Moses is frequently represented with horns! Aaron and the people were afraid to approach him in such radiant splendour (ver. 30); but Moses encouraged them, called them to himself, and spoke to them (ver. 31). But when he was alone, he covered his face with a veil, which he took off whenever God spoke to him, or whenever he addressed the people. The custom,

Israel *that* which he was commanded. 35. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the veil upon his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.

therefore, of some Oriental princes, who wear a veil (*letham* or *kenaa*) when they appear in public, is in no way similar to this practice of Moses, who covered his face, evidently as a symbol of deep and

undivided reflection, such as behoved him who had been deemed worthy to experience the awful splendour of the Almighty.

CHAPTER XXXV.

SUMMARY.—After having again enjoined the strict observance of the Sabbath (xxxv. 1—3), Moses invites the people to bring free-will gifts for the construction of the Tabernacle, and its vessels, and for the holy garments (ver. 4—20); the people respond so liberally to the call that Moses saw the necessity of restraining their hearty generosity (xxxv. 1—7). Bezaleel, Aholiab, and all the skilful workmen began their work; they made the curtains with their loops and taches (vers. 8—19); the boards (vers. 20—30), and their bars (vers. 31—34); the vails before the Holy of Holies and before the Sanctuary, with their pillars (vers. 35—38).—Bezaleel then finished the ark and its staves (xxxvii. 1—5); the mercy-seat and the Cherubim (vers. 6—9); the table of shew-bread, with its staves and vessels (vers. 10—16); the candlestick with its accessories (vers. 17—24); the altar of incense with its staves (vers. 25—28); and the anointing oil and the incense of perfumes (ver. 29).—He further made the altar of burnt-offering with its staves and vessels (xxxviii. 1—7); the laver and its base (ver. 8); the Court with its pillars and hangings (vers. 9—20). The text inserts the amount of gold, silver, and brass contributed and used for the Tabernacle (vers. 24—31). Lastly, the holy garments were made: the ephod, with its two onyxes, (xxxix. 1—7); the breast-plate with the twelve precious stones, its chains, sockets, and rings (vers. 8—21); the robe of the ephod, with the pomegranates and bells (vers. 22—26); the tunics (ver. 27); the mitre with the golden plate, the turbans (vers. 28, 30, 31); and the girdles (ver. 29). After all parts of the holy tent and of the sacred garments were finished, they were submitted to Moses for examination; he declared them all in perfect accordance with the precepts of God, and blessed the people (vers. 32—43).—On the first day of the first month in the second year, after the exodus from Egypt, Moses was commanded to rear up the Tabernacle, to anoint it and its utensils; and to wash, clothe, and anoint Aaron and his sons (xl. 1—15). When Moses had strictly executed all these injunctions (vers. 16—33), the cloud covered the tent, and the glory of God filled the habitation; Moses was unable to enter. When the cloud arose from the Tabernacle, the Israelites continued their journeys; when it rested on it, they encamped; during the day a cloud, and during the night a fire was on the Tabernacle, and assured the Israelites of the immediate presence and protection of their God (vers. 34—38).

AND Moses assembled all the congregation of the children of Israel, and said to them, These *are* the words which the Lord hath commanded, that *you*

1. Now only Moses communicated to the people the Divine commands concerning the holy service contained in chap. xxv.—xxxi.; after the covenant

should do them. 2. Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy *day*, a great day of rest to the Lord: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death. 3. You shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations on the Sabbath day.—4. And Moses spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This *is* the thing which the Lord commanded, saying, 5. Take from among you an offering to the Lord: whosoever *is* of a willing heart, let him bring it, the offering of the Lord; gold, and silver, and brass, 6. And blue, and red, and crimson, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, 7. And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and acacia wood, 8. And oil for the lights, and spices for anointing oil, and for incense of perfumes, 9. And onyx-stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breast-plate. 10. And every wise-hearted among you shall come, and make all that the Lord hath commanded; 11. The Tabernacle, its tent, and its covering, its taches, and its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets; 12. The ark, and its staves, the mercy-seat, and the vail *as a* hanging; 13. The table, and its staves, and all its vessels, and the shew-bread; 14. And the candlestick for the light, and its vessels, and its lamps, with the oil for the light, 15. And the altar of incense, and its staves, and the anointing oil, and the incense of perfumes, and the hanging at the door, for the door of the Tabernacle; 16. The altar of burnt-offering, with its brazen grate, its staves, and all its vessels, the laver and

which had been broken by the worship of the golden calf (xxxii.) had been renewed (xxxiii., xxxiv.).—The people was assembled, because all should participate in the holy work.

2—3. Whilst the law concerning Sabbath *concludes* the precepts of God about the Tabernacle (xxxi. 12, 17), Moses *begins* them with it; because the sanctification of the Sabbath, which is a sign of Covenant between God and Israel, and which is intended to lead to a spiritual and internal life, is the safest

guarantee of the future faithfulness of Israel. This law is here, therefore, not merely repeated to show, "that the work of the Tabernacle is not allowed on Sabbath."—About the reason why no fire should be kindled on the day of rest, see p. 268. It has been remarked, that this command could not materially inconvenience the inhabitants of Palestine, since they take one principal meal towards the evening; they could therefore prepare one on Friday afternoon, and another on Saturday immediately after dusk. But this is

its base; 17. The hangings of the Court, its pillars, and their sockets, and the hanging *for the* door of the Court; 18. The pins of the Tabernacle, and the pins of the Court, and their cords; 19. The garments of service, to do service in the holy *place*, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to serve as priests.—20. And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. 21. And they came, every one whose heart impelled him, and every one whom his spirit made willing, *and* they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the Tent of Meeting, and for all its service, and for the holy garments. 22. And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought ¹nose-rings, and ear-rings, and ²necklaces, all articles of gold: and every man who offered an offering of gold to the Lord. 23. And every man with whom was found blue, and red, and crimson, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, and red skins of rams, and badgers' skins, brought *them*. 24. Every one who wished to offer an offering of silver and brass brought the Lord's offering: and every man, with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service, brought *it*. 25. And all the women who were wise-hearted spun with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, *both* of blue, and of red, *and* of crimson, and of fine linen. 26. And all the women whose heart impelled them in wisdom spun goats' *hair*. 27. And the chiefs brought

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Bracelets.

² Tablets.

erroneous; it was considered a part of the Sabbath recreation to enjoy a cheerful meal during the day, not after its conclusion; and in xvi. 23, it is expressly commanded to prepare, on the sixth day, the food of the Sabbath. It is known that the Caraites observe this law to the very letter, and suffer in their houses on Sabbath neither light nor fire; and the efforts which some more liberal members of that sect have made to relax the rigour of this very inconvenient practice (for instance, Elijah Bechizi, in the fif-

teenth century), have proved unsuccessful.

4. About the stuffs here enumerated, see p. 372—376.

11. About the difference between habitation and tent, see p. 390.

11—19. See xxxi. 2—11.

22. About the sources of the wealth of the Israelites in that time, see note on xxv. 3.

27. According to ancient interpreters, the chiefs of Israel brought the precious stones for the ephod and the breast-plate,

onyx-stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod, and for the breast-plate; 28. And the spice, and the oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the incense of perfumes. 29. Every man and woman whose heart made them willing to offer for all manner of work, which the Lord had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses, *this* the children of Israel offered as a free-will gift to the Lord.—30. And Moses said to the children of Israel, See, the Lord hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; 31. And He hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; 32. And to devise skilful designs, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, 33. And in the cutting of stones, to set *them*, and in carving of wood, to work in all manner of skilful work. 34. And He hath given in his heart to teach, *both in his heart and that of* Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. 35. He hath filled them with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the artificer, and of the 'skilful weaver, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in red, in crimson, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, and of those who do any work, and of those who devise skilful designs.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Cunning workman.

with the names of their respective tribes already engraved on them. But first the materials alone were collected, and then only the artists were appointed and invited to work them into the required utensils or ornaments (ver. 30, *et seq.*); for the works demanded a common supervision and control; or else some parts

might have been produced in superfluity, others in too small quantity; the statement in xxxvi. 6, does not militate against this conception; for only when all the works were completed, the people could be requested not to bring any more materials.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

¹ **A**ND Bezaleel and Aholiab shall make, and every wise-hearted man, to whom the Lord hath given wisdom and understanding to know how to work all

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab.

manner of work for the service of the Sanctuary, according to all which the Lord hath commanded.—2. And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise-hearted man, in whose heart the Lord had given wisdom, *even* every one whose heart impelled him to approach the work to do it. 3. And they received of Moses all the offering, which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the Sanctuary, to make it. And they brought yet to him free-will gifts every morning. 4. And all the wise men who wrought all the work of the Sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made; 5. And they spoke to Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make. 6. And Moses commanded, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the Sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. 7. For the material they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.—8. And so every wise-hearted man among them who wrought ²the work, made the habitation ten curtains *of* fine twined linen, and blue, and red, and crimson: *with* Cherubim of the work of the skilful weaver made he them. 9. The length of the one curtain *was* eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of the one curtain four cubits: one measure *was* for all the curtains. 10. And he coupled the five curtains one to another: and *the other* five curtains he coupled one to another. 11. And he made loops of blue upon the border of the one curtain from the edge in the coupling: and the same he made in the border of the uttermost curtain in the second coupling. 12. Fifty loops made he in the one curtain, and fifty loops made he in the edge of the curtain which *was* in the second coupling: the loops corresponded one

² *Engl. Vers.*—The work of the Tabernacle, made, etc.

8—36. See xxvi. Although even in the Biblical style (see Gen. xxiv), the literal repetitions of the same occurrence, lengthened and accurate reiteration of the description of the holy vessels seems

with another. 13. And he made fifty taches of gold, and coupled the curtains one to another with the taches: so the habitation became one. 14. And he made curtains *of goats' hair* for the tent over the habitation: eleven curtains he made them. 15. The length of the one curtain *was* thirty cubits, and four cubits *was* the breadth of the one curtain: one measure *was* for the eleven curtains. 16. And he coupled five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves. 17. And he made fifty loops on the border of the curtain *which was* uttermost in the coupling, and fifty loops made he on the border of the curtain in the second coupling. 18. And he made fifty taches *of* brass to couple the tent together, that it might be one. 19. And he made a covering for the tent *of* rams' skins dyed red, and a covering *of* badgers' skins above *that*.—20. And he made the boards for the Tabernacle *of* acacia wood, standing up. 21. The length of the board *was* ten cubits, and the breadth of one board one cubit and a half. 22. One board had two tenons, arranged one against the other: thus did he make for all the boards of the Tabernacle. 23. And he made the boards for the Tabernacle, twenty boards for the south side, southward: 24. And forty sockets of silver he made under the twenty boards; two sockets under the board for its two tenons, and two sockets under another board for its two tenons. 25. And for the second side of the Tabernacle, on the north side, he made twenty boards. 26. And their forty sockets *of* silver; two sockets under the one board, and two sockets under another board. 27. And for the side of the Tabernacle westward he made six boards. 28. And two boards made he at the corners of the Tabernacle in the two sides. 29. And they were double beneath, and at the same time they were double above, at the one ring: thus he did to both of them in both the corners. 30. And there were eight boards; and their sockets *were* of silver,

to imply their importance, their significance, and their symbolical character; Moses had seen their models on the

mount (xxv. 9, 40); and he watched that they were conscientiously executed according to the Divine prototypes.—In this

sixteen sockets, under every board two sockets.—31. And he made bars of acacia wood; five for the boards of the one side of the Tabernacle, 32. And five bars for the boards of the other side of the Tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the Tabernacle for the side westward. 33. And he made the middle bar to pass through the boards from one end to the other. 34. And he overlaid the boards with gold, and made their rings *of gold to be* places for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.—35. And he made a vail *of* blue, red, and crimson, and fine twined linen: of the work of the skilful weaver he made it, *with* Cherubim. 36. And he made thereto four pillars *of* acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold: their hooks *were of* gold; and he cast for them four sockets of silver.—37. And he made a hanging for the door of the Tabernacle *of* blue, and red, and crimson, and fine twined linen, *of* the work of the embroiderer, 38. And its five pillars, with their hooks: and he overlaid their capitals and their rods with gold, and their five sockets *were of* brass.

and the following chapters the Alexandrian version contains numerous deviations from, and transpositions of the

Hebrew text, so that even the division into verses is doubtful.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

AND Bezaleel made the ark *of* acacia wood: two cubits and a half *was* its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. 2. And he overlaid it with pure gold within and without, and made a crown of gold to it round about. 3. And he cast for it four rings of gold on its four feet; two rings upon the one side of it, and two rings upon the other side of it. 4. And he made staves of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold. 5. And he put the staves

1. Ver. 1—24, see xxv. 10—40; ver. 25—28, xxx. 1—5; ver. 29, xxx. 23—38.

—In regular order, first the vessels of the Holy of Holies, and then those of the

Holy are described, whilst the following chapter mentions the construction of the Court and its utensils.

into the rings on the sides of the ark, to bear the ark.—6. And he made the mercy-seat *of* pure gold: two cubits and a half *was* its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth. 7. And he made two Cherubim *of* gold, of beaten-work made he them, on the two ends of the mercy-seat; 8. One cherub on the one end, and another cherub on the other end: out of the mercy-seat he made the Cherubim on its two ends. 9. And the Cherubim spread out *their* wings over *it*, covering with their wings the mercy-seat, and their faces *looked* one to another; towards the mercy-seat were the faces of the Cherubim.—10. And he made the table of acacia wood: two cubits *was* its length, and a cubit its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height: 11. And he overlaid it with pure gold, and made thereto a crown of gold round about. 12. And he made to it a border of a hand-breadth round about; and made a crown of gold to its border round about. 13. And he cast for it four rings of gold, and put the rings in the four corners which *were* on its four feet. 14. Over against the border were the rings for places for the staves to bear the table. 15. And he made the staves *of* acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold, to bear the table. 16. And he made the vessels which *were* upon the table, its dishes, and its bowls, and its cups with which the libations were made, *of* pure gold.—17. And he made the candlestick *of* pure gold: *of* beaten-work made he the candlestick; its base and its shaft, its calyxes, its apples, and its blossoms, were of the same: 18. And six branches came out of its sides; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side thereof, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side. 19. Three calyxes of almond-flowers, with apple and blossom, on one branch; and three calyxes of almond-flowers, with apple and blossom, on another branch; so on the six branches coming out of the candlestick. 20. And on the candlestick *were* four calyxes of almond-flowers, with their apples and blossoms: 21. And an apple under two branches of the same, and an apple under two branches of the same, and an apple under two

branches of the same, according to the six branches coming out of it. 22. Their apples and their branches were of the same; all of it *was* one beaten-work of pure gold. 23. And he made its seven lamps, and its snuffers, and its fire-shovels, of pure gold. 24. Of a talent of pure gold made he it and all its vessels.—25. And he made the incense altar of acacia wood: its length *was* a cubit, and its breadth a cubit; *it was* square; and two cubits *was* its height, its horns were of the same. 26. And he overlaid it with pure gold, *both* its top and its sides round about, and its horns; and he made to it a crown of gold round about. 27. And he made two rings of gold for it under its crown, at its two corners, upon its two sides, for places for the staves to bear it with them. 28. And he made the staves of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold.—29. And he made the holy anointing oil, and the pure incense of perfumes, according to the work of the ointment-maker.

29. This verse alone interrupts the regular enumeration, evidently because the incense belonged to the service of the Holy, not of the Court.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

AND he made the altar of burnt-offering of acacia wood: five cubits *was* its length, and five cubits its breadth; *it was* square; and three cubits its height. 2. And he made its horns on its four corners; its horns were of the same: and he overlaid it *with* brass. 3. And he made all the vessels of the altar, the pots, and its shovels, and its basins, *and* the fleshhooks, and the fire-pans: all the vessels thereof made he of brass. 4. And he made for the altar a brazen grate of network, under its border beneath, to the midst of it. 5. And he cast four rings for the four ends of the brazen grate, for places for the staves. 6. And he made the staves of acacia wood, and overlaid them *with* brass. 7. And he put the staves into the rings on the sides of the altar, to bear it with them;

he made the altar hollow with boards.—8. And he made the laver *of* brass, and its base *of* brass, of the looking-glasses of ¹*the women* who served *at* the door of the Tent of Meeting.—9. And he made the Court: for the south side southward *were* hangings of the Court, *of* fine twined linen, one hundred cubits. 10. Their pillars *were* twenty, and their sockets twenty *of* brass; the hooks of the pillars and their rods *were of* silver. 11. And for the north side *the hangings were* one hundred cubits, their pillars *were* twenty, and their sockets twenty *of* brass; the hooks of the pillars and their rods *of* silver. 12. And for the west side *were* hangings *of* fifty cubits, their pillars ten, and their sockets ten; the hooks of the pillars and their rods *of* silver. 13. And for the east side eastward fifty cubits. 14. The hangings of the one side *of the gate were* fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three. 15. And for the other side of the Court gate, on this hand and on that hand, *were* hangings of fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three. 16. All the hangings of the Court round about *were of* fine twined linen. 17. And the sockets for the pillars *were of* brass; the hooks of the pillars and their rods *of* silver; and the overlaying of their capitals *of* silver; and all the pillars of the Court *were* united with rods of silver. 18. And the hanging for the gate of the Court *was of* the work of the embroiderer, *of* blue, and red, and crimson, and fine twined linen: and twenty cubits *was* the length, and the height with the breadth *was* five cubits, corresponding with the hangings of the Court. 19. And their pillars *were* four, and their

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Of the women assembling, which assembled.

s. The laver and its base were made “of the mirrors of the women who served at the door of the Tent of Meeting.” It is perfectly inappropriate to understand, “with the mirrors,” signifying that the latter were affixed on the laver to remind the priests, before entering the Holy Tabernacle, of the duty of self-examination (see p. 372). That the mirrors of the ancient Egyptians were

of metal, especially of brass, is universally known; at Thebes some of these utensils have been discovered, which have almost been restored to their original polish. Although Egyptian women visited the temples, according to ancient testimonies, with mirrors in their left hands, it is unnecessary to suppose with Spencer, that Moses, in order to preclude this practice among the Hebrews, ordered

sockets *of* brass four; their hooks *of* silver, and the overlaying of their capitals and their rods *of* silver. 20. And all the pins of the Tabernacle, and of the Court round about, *were of* brass.—21. These are the accounts of the Tabernacle, *even* of the Tabernacle of the Testimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses, ¹*by* the service of the Levites, through Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest. 22. And Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the Lord commanded Moses. 23. And with him *was* Aholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an artificer, and a skilful weaver, and an embroiderer in blue, and in red, and in crimson, and in fine linen.—24. And all the gold which was applied for the work, in all the holy work, the gold of the offering, was twenty-nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary.—25. And the silver of those who were numbered of the congregation *was* one hundred talents, and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary: 26. A bekah for every man, *that is*, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for every one who passed to those who were numbered, from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty *men*. 27. And the hundred talents of silver were for casting the sockets of the Sanctuary, and the sockets of the vail; one hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket. 28. And of the thousand seven hundred and seventy-five *shekels* he made hooks for the pillars, and

¹ *Engl Vers.*—For.

the women to offer their mirrors for the construction of the laver and its base. —The “Tent of Meeting,” is here either the tent of Moses (xxxiii. 7), or, by anticipation, the holy Tabernacle.

9—20. See xxvii. 9—19.

21. The tent is called the “Tabernacle of Testimony” on account of the Tables of the Law which formed its most important contents (xxxii. 18; see p. 377).

21. About the talent and shekel see note on xxi. 32.

26. The number of the Israelites above twenty years (603,550), is the same in this and in the later census, Numb. i. 46; but there were, besides, 22,000 Levites (Numb. iii. 39), who seem not to be included in our passage.

28. According to Rosenmüller, the rods were not of solid silver, but only

overlaid their capitals, and made rods for them. — 29. And the brass of the offering *was* seventy talents, and two thousand and four hundred shekels. 30. And therewith he made the sockets to the door of the Tent of Meeting, and the brazen altar, and the brazen grate for it, and all the vessels of the altar. 31. And the sockets of the Court round about, and the sockets of the Court gate, and all the pins of the Tabernacle, and all the pins of the Court round about.

overlaid with this metal, as, else, the 1,775 shekels would not have sufficed; and he adduces the analogies of xl. 5, compared with xxx. 1, 3; and of xxxix. 39, compared with xxvii. 1, 2.

30, 31. The laver and its base are here not enumerated among the brazen vessels, as they were made of the mirrors which the women offered separately for that purpose.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

AND of the blue, and the red, and the crimson, they made garments of office, to do service in the holy place, and made the holy garments for Aaron; as the Lord commanded Moses. 2. And he made the ephod of gold, blue, and red, and crimson, and fine twined linen. 3. And they beat the gold into thin plates, and cut *it* into wires, to work *it* in the blue, and in the red, and in the crimson, and in the fine linen, *with* the work of the skilful weaver. 4. They made shoulder-pieces for it, 'coupled together: at the two ends it was coupled together. 5. And the band of the ephod, which *was* upon it, *was* of the same *piece*, and of the same workmanship, of gold, blue, and red, and crimson, and fine twined linen; as the Lord commanded Moses.—6. And they wrought the onyx stones, set in sockets of gold, graven *like* the engravings of a signet, with the names of the children of Israel. 7. And he put them on the shoulders of the

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—To couple it together.

2—31. See xxviii. 6—40.

3. The metal was first beaten into thin plates. These plates were then cut into narrow slips, which were afterwards, by means of a hammer and a file, rounded

into the form of wires. In the Hebrew text the singular changes here with the plural, as very frequently in these chapters, since both the one and the other have an impersonal signification; this

ephod, as stones of memorial for the children of Israel; as the Lord commanded Moses.—8. And he made the breast-plate *with* the work of the skilful weaver, like the work of the ephod; *of* gold, blue, red, and crimson, and fine twined linen. 9. It was square; they made the breast-plate double: one span *was* its length, and one span its breadth, *being* doubled. 10. And they set in it four rows of stones: *the first row was* a carnelian, a topaz, and a smaragd: *this was* the first row. 11. And the second row, a carbuncle, a sapphire, and an emerald. 12. And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. 13. And the fourth row, a chrysolite, an onyx, and a jasper: *they were* enclosed in sockets of gold in their settings. 14. And the stones *were* according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, *like* the engravings of a signet, every one according to its name, for the twelve tribes. 15. And they made upon the breast-plate chains *of* wreathen work, ¹twisted in the manner of ropes, *of* pure gold. 16. And they made two sockets *of* gold, and two gold rings, and put the two rings on the two ends of the breast-plate. 17. And they put the two wreathen *chains* of gold in the two rings on the ends of the breast-plate. 18. And the *other* two ends of the two wreathen *chains* they fastened in the two sockets, and put them on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, before it. 19. And they made two rings of gold, and put *them* on the two ends of the breast-plate, upon its border, which *was* on the side of the ephod inward. 20. And they made two *other* golden rings, and put them on the two ²shoulder-pieces of the ephod underneath, toward the fore-part of it, over against its joining, above the band of the ephod. 21. And they fastened the breast-plate by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a ribbon of blue, that *it*

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—"Twisted in the manner of ropes," omitted.

² Sides.

change does not always indicate that different persons executed the different parts of the works, as some critics inferred.

21. The Samaritan text adds: "And they made the Urim and Thummim;"

but this is superfluous, since the Urim and Thummim are identical with the twelve gems enumerated in vers. 10–13; see p. 410.

might be above the band of the ephod, and that the breastplate might not be loosed from the ephod; as the Lord commanded Moses.—22. And he made the robe of the ephod of woven work, all of blue. 23. And *there was* an opening in the midst of the robe, like the opening of a coat of mail, with a border round about the opening, that it should not be rent. 24. And they made upon the hem of the robe pomegranates of blue, and red, and crimson, and twined linen. 25. And they made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates upon the hem of the robe, round about between the pomegranates; 26. A bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, round about the hem of the robe, to minister *in it*; as the Lord commanded Moses.—27. And they made the tunics of fine linen, of woven work, for Aaron and for his sons; 28. And the mitre of fine linen, and the beautiful turbans of fine linen, and the linen drawers of fine twined linen; 29. And the girdle of fine twined linen, and blue, and red, and crimson, of the work of the embroiderer; as the Lord commanded Moses.—30. And they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, *like the* engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. 31. And they tied to it a ribbon of blue, to put *it* on the mitre above; as the Lord commanded Moses.—32. Thus was all the work of the habitation of the Tent of Meeting finished: and the children of Israel did according to all which the Lord had commanded Moses, so they did. 33. And they brought the habitation to Moses, the tent, and all its vessels, its taches, its boards, its bars, and its pillars, and its sockets; 34. And the covering of rams' skins dyed red, and the covering of badgers' skins, and the vail for the hanging; 35. The ark of the testimony, and its staves and the mercy-seat; 36. The table, and all its vessels, and the shew-bread; 37. The pure candlestick, with its lamps, the lamps to be arranged in order, and all its vessels, and the oil for the light; 38. And the golden altar, and the anointing oil, and the incense of perfumes, and the hanging for the door of the Tabernacle;

39. The brazen altar, and its grate of brass, its staves, and all its vessels, the laver and its base; 40. The hangings of the Court, its pillars, and its sockets, and the hanging for the gate of the Court, its cords, and its pins, and all the vessels of the service of the habitation for the Tent of the Meeting; 41. The garments of office to do service in the holy *place*, 'the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and his sons' garments, to serve as the priests. 42. According to all that the Lord had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work. 43. And Moses saw all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—And the holy garments.

CHAPTER XL.

AND the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2. On the first day of the first month shalt thou rear the habitation of the Tent of Meeting. 3. And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, ²and hang the vail before the ark. 4. And thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the things which are to be set in order upon it; and thou shalt bring in the candlestick, and put on its lamps. 5. And thou shalt place the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony, and put the hanging of the door on the habitation. 6. And thou shalt place the altar of the burnt-offering before the door of the habitation of the Tent of Meeting. 7. And thou shalt place the laver between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and shalt put water therein. 8. And thou shalt erect the Court round about, and put the hanging at the Court gate. 9. And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the Tabernacle, and all that *is* therein, and shalt

² *Engl. Vers.*—And cover the ark with the vail.

2. On the first day of the first month after the departure from Egypt, or one year less fourteen days after this event, the Tabernacle was reared up.

3. The vail which "covers the ark," is that which separates the Holy of Holies from the Holy; compare ver. 21.

hallow it, and all its vessels; and it shall be holy. 10. And thou shalt anoint the altar of burnt-offering, and all its vessels, and hallow the altar; and it shall be an altar most holy. 11. And thou shalt anoint the laver and its base, and hallow it. 12. And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the Tent of Meeting, and wash them with water. 13. And thou shalt clothe Aaron in the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may serve me as priest. 14. And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with tunics; 15. And thou shalt anoint them, as thou hast anointed their father, that they may serve me as priests: for their anointing shall certainly be for an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations. 16. Thus did Moses; according to all that the Lord had commanded him, so he did.—17. And it was in the first month of the second year, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the Tabernacle was reared up. 18. And Moses reared the habitation, and placed its sockets, and set up its boards, and fastened its bars, and reared up its pillars. 19. And he spread the tent over the habitation, and put the covering of the tent above upon it; as the Lord had commanded Moses. 20. And he took and placed the testimony in the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy-seat above the ark: 21. And he brought the ark into the Tabernacle, and set up the vail of the covering, and hung *it* before the ark of the testimony; as the Lord had

15. Whilst every successive High-priest was to be anointed in the same manner as Aaron had been anointed, the common priests required, later, no unction, but only a consecration; with the sons of Aaron all their descendants were anointed for all futurity.

23—31. The ceremonies here described, were performed by Moses only after the Tabernacle was erected and anointed, during the seven days of consecration; on the eighth day the priests themselves undertook these functions, from which Moses then for ever abstained (see Levit. viii. ix).

34—38. The same cloud which was to the Israelites, since their exodus from Egypt, a sign and pledge of Divine protection, covered now the holy Tent; the glory of the Lord filled it so completely that Moses was unable to enter; this was for the people a guarantee that God intended to dwell among them; that He had again accepted them as His “peculiar treasure;” only when the cloud had withdrawn to the Holy of Holies, Moses could approach God and commune with Him. This cloud was at the same time a signal for the journeys of Israel; when it rested over the Tabernacle, they

commanded Moses. 22. And he placed the table in the Tent of Meeting, upon the side of the Tabernacle northward, without the vail. 23. And he arranged the bread in order upon it before the Lord; as the Lord had commanded Moses. 24. And he put the candlestick in the Tent of Meeting over against the table, on the side of the Tabernacle southward. 25. And he put on the lamps before the Lord; as the Lord commanded Moses. 26. And he put the golden altar in the Tent of Meeting before the vail: 27. And he burnt incense of perfumes thereon; as the Lord had commanded Moses. 28. And he put the hanging of the door before the Tabernacle. 29. And he put the altar of burnt-offering *before* the door of the habitation of the Tent of Meeting, and offered upon it the burnt-offering and the meat-offering; as the Lord had commanded Moses. 30. And he set the laver between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and put water there for washing. 31. And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet thereat; 32. When they went into the Tent of Meeting, and when they approached the altar, they washed; as the Lord had commanded Moses. 33. And he reared up the Court round about the Tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the Court gate. So Moses finished the work.— 34. Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the habitation. 35. And Moses

encamped; when it rose from it, they continued their marches, as is more fully described in Numb. ix. 17—22. This notice is here, by anticipation, inserted from the same principle, which guided the sacred historian in the remark contained in xvi. 35; he frequently combines the facts bearing on the same subject to one complete narrative; he writes no chronicle, but a pragmatistical history. But further, the contents of these verses point, on the one hand, to the journeys detailed in the fourth Book, whilst they are, on the other hand, closely connected with Leviticus, where the whole

organization of the Sanctuary and of priesthood is described: the Books of the Law are not only individually in harmony with their parts, but they form collectively a work internally pervaded by the spirit of unity and order.

The history of the Tabernacle may thus be traced. During the journeys of the Israelites, its various parts and utensils were carefully wrapped up and carried by the Levites, who erected it again when the Israelites encamped. In the time of Joshua it was brought to Shiloh, where it remained during the whole period of the Judges, and where annually the great

was not able to enter into the Tent of Meeting, for the cloud rested on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the habitation. 36. And when the cloud ¹arose from the Tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: 37. But if the cloud did not arise, then they did not journey till the day that it arose. 38. For the cloud of the Lord *was* upon the Tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

¹ *Engl. Vers.*—Was taken up.

national festivals were celebrated; it was considered as the only legitimate sanctuary, although other holy places of public assembly are mentioned from the lifetime of Joshua down to the period of the kings, as Shechem, Gilgal, Mizpah, and Bethel. After the great victory of the Philistines in the time of Eli, the Tabernacle was removed to Nob, likewise in the territory of Benjamin; but was, after the destruction of this town, brought to Gibeon, where we meet it in the time of David and Solomon. The latter king ordered it to be brought to Jerusalem, and, with all its vessels, to be deposited in the temple. From this time it is no more mentioned in the sacred records.—The equally changeful fate of the Ark of the Covenant will be adverted to in its proper place.

So, then, had the descendants of Jacob advanced a most momentous step; we

found them, at the beginning of this book, as an increasing multitude of ill-treated and idolatrous slaves; we leave them as a free nation, the guardians of eternal truth, the witnesses of overwhelming miracles. Released from the vain and busy worldliness of proud Egypt, they encamp in the silent desert, in isolated and solemn solitude, holding converse only with their thoughts and with their God. Before them stood erected the visible habitation of Him whom they acknowledged and adored as their rescuer from Egyptian thralldom; the mysterious structure disclosed to them many profound ideas of their new religion; and they respected the priests as their representatives and their mediators. The communion between God and His people was opened; the pious might preserve, the penitent sinner might restore the harmony of the mind; life had its aim, and virtue its guide.

ADDITIONS.

To p. 47.

Ewald is of opinion that Sinai is the earlier, Horeb the later name. But if this is the case, did both peaks, the northern and the southern one, bear *the same name*? And what are the reasons which Ewald adduces for this opinion? “Deborah (Jud. v. 5) uses the name of Sinai, whereas that of Horeb is not found earlier than—Exod. iii. 1; xvii. 6, etc.,” for that critic assigns these portions of Exodus to the “fourth historian” of the Pentateuch.—For those who are familiar with Ewald’s theory of analyzing, or rather anatomizing, the sacred books, this remark requires no elucidation.—However, it is evident from xvii. 6, compared with xix. 1, 20, that Horeb designates the whole region, since already during the encampment of the Hebrews in Rephidim, Moses stood “on a rock in Horeb,” but that Sinai is the name of the highest mountain of that region, on which the revelation took place.

To p. 154.

Royle (in *Kitto’s Cyclop. of Bibl. Lit.* ii. p. 976) believes the hyssop of the Bible to be identical with the *caper-plant* (*capparis spinosa*), called in Arabic *asuf*, which grows in several valleys about Mount Sinai, “creeping up the mountain side like a parasitic plant, its branches covered with small thorns.” But although Royle’s demonstration is admirable for its logical precision, he does not succeed in raising his opinion beyond a vague hypothesis, the principal support of which is an accidental, but often illusory, resemblance of names.

To p. 442.

The attributes of God, are:—

The Eternal is the Eternal; that is, as the Talmud explains it: “I am the Lord before man sins, and I am the Lord after he has sinned and repented,” He does not chastise for ever; His loving-kindness changes not.

He is an *all-powerful God*, Lord of the Universe, ruler of nature and mankind; might and glory belong to Him alone.

Merciful, full of affectionate sympathy for the sufferings of human frailty; looking with feeling compassion on the imperfections, the aberrations, and the miseries of mankind.

Gracious, assisting and helping wherever aid is necessary, consoling the afflicted and raising up the oppressed.

Long-suffering, not hastening to punish the sinner immediately after his transgression, but leaving him time, and affording him opportunities to retrace his evil course.

Abundant in goodness, granting His gifts and blessings beyond the desert of man; not distributing His bounties with cold and rigid justice, but prompted by kindness, and by the desire of beatifying His creatures.

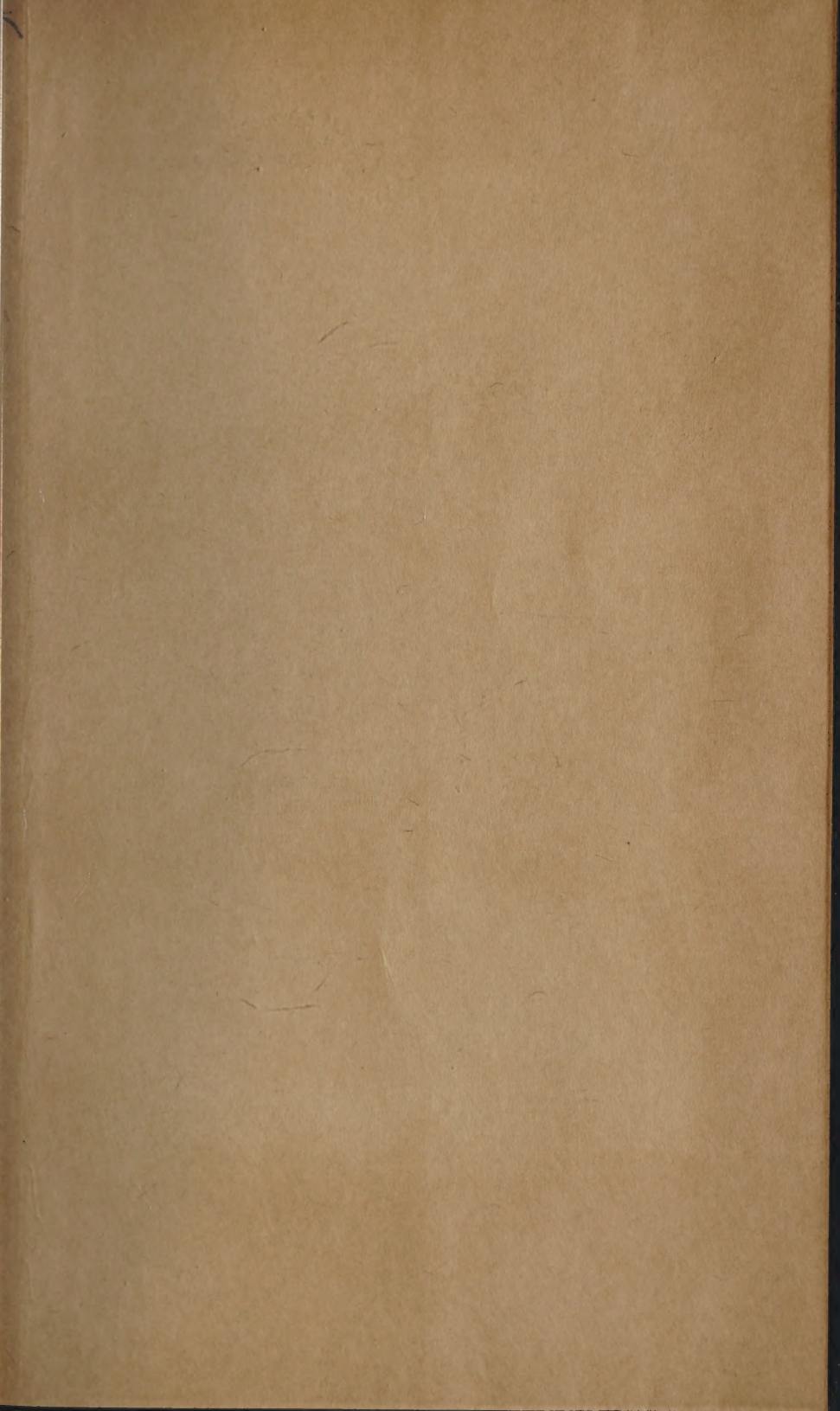
Full of truth, not only recompensing the pious as He has promised, but eternally true to Himself, pursuing His sublime and inscrutable schemes for the salvation of mankind; faithfully governing the world in accordance with the truths revealed by Him.

Keeping mercy for thousands, remembering the good deeds of the ancestors to the thousandth generation (xx. 6); reserving reward and recompensation to the remotest descendants.

Pardoning every transgression; bearing with indulgence the sins of man, and by forgiveness restoring him to the original purity of his soul. The Rabbins distinguish between sins committed from evil disposition, from malice or spirit of opposition, and from error or heedlessness. God is ever ready to pardon all transgressions, either springing up from a corrupt heart or careless unconsciousness of the snares surrounding the path of virtue.

However, as man is a free agent, as he is responsible for his deeds, and as he possesses a spirit capable of discerning between right and wrong, *God cannot leave entirely unpunished* repeated wickedness and obstinate persistence in evil; His goodness cannot destroy His justice; He is often compelled to inflict chastisement to reform the sinner; man is to gain salvation by exerting his innate divine powers; he is to strive after the purity of God with perseverance and zeal; but in these exertions he can be certain of God's gracious assistance; the incompetency of man is aided by a superior power; and the justice of God is as much tempered by kindness, as His kindness is kept in constant equipoise by His paternal severity. Another interpretation of this attribute see on p. 262.

FINIS.



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